A CALL TO THE Unconverted TO *Turn* and *Live*, AND Accept of Mercy while Mercy may be had, as ever they would find Mercy in the day of their extremity :

From the Living God.

By his unworthy Servant
RICHARD BAXTER.

To be Read in Families where any are Unconverted.

The fifth Edition.

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The Reason of this Work.

IN that short Acquaintance I had with that Reverend, Learned servant of Christ, Bishop *Usher*, he was oft from first to last importunating me to write a Directory for the several ranks of professed Christians, which might distinctly give each one their portion, beginning with the Unconverted, and then proceeding to the babes in

 Christ,

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Chriſt, and then to the ſtrong; and mixing ſome ſpecial helps againſt the ſeveral ſins that they are addicted to. By the ſuddenneſs of his motion at our firſt congreſs, I perceived it was in his mind before: And I told him, both that it is abundantly done by many already; and that his unacquaintedneſs with my weakneſs, might make him think me fitter for it then I was. But this did not ſatisfie him, but ſtill he made it his requeſt. I confeſs I was not moved by his Reaſons, nor did I apprehend any great need of doing more then is done in that way: nor that I was likely to do more. And therefore I parted from him without the leaſt purpoſe to anſwer his deſire. But ſince his death, his words oft came into my mind: and the great Reverence I bore to him, did the more incline me to think with ſome com-

complacency of his motion. And having of late intended to write a Family Directory, I began to apprehend how congruously the forementioned work should lead the way; and the several conditions of mens souls be spoken of, before we come to the several Relations. Hereupon I resolved by Gods assistance to proceed in the order following. First, to speak to the impenitent Unconverted sinners, who are not yet so much as purposing to Turn, or at least are not setting about the work. And with these I thought a wakening Perswasive was a more necessary means then meer Directions. For Directions suppose men willing to obey them: but the persons that we have first to deal with, are wilfull and asleep in sin, and as men that are past feeling, having given themselves over to sin

with greedineſs, *Epheſ.* 4. 19
My next work muſt be for thoſe that have ſome purpoſes to Turn, and are about the Work, to Direct them for a through and true Converſion, that they miſcarry not in the birth. The third part muſt be Directions for the younger and weaker ſort of Chriſtians, that they may be ſtabliſhed, built up, and perſevere. The fourth part, Directions for lapſed and back-ſliding Chriſtians, for their ſafe Recovery. Beſides theſe, there is intended ſome ſhort Perſwaſives and Directions againſt ſome ſpecial Errors of the times, and againſt ſome common killing ſins. As for Directions to Doubting troubled Conſciences, that is done already. And the ſtrong I ſhall not write Directions for, becauſe they are ſo much taught of God already. And then the laſt part is intended

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more ſpecially for Families as ſuch, Directing the ſeveral Relations in their Duties. Some of theſe are already written: whether I ſhall have life and leiſure for the reſt, God only knoweth. And therefore I ſhall publiſh the ſeveral parts by themſelves, as I write them; and the rather becauſe they are intended for men of different ſtates, and becauſe I would not deter them by the bulk or price, from reading what is written for their benefit. The uſe that this part is publiſhed for, is, 1. For Maſters and Parents to read often in their Families, if they have ſervants or Children that are yet unconverted. 2. For all ſuch Unconverted perſons to read and conſider of themſelves. 3. For the richer ſort that have any pitty on ſuch miſerable ſouls, to give to the unſanctified that need them: (if they have not

fitter at hand to use and give) The Lord awake us to work while it is day for the saving of our own and others souls, in subserviency to the Blessed God, the Maker, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier of souls.

Decemb. 10.
1657.

Rich. Baxter.

To

To all unsanctified persons that shall read this Book; Especially of my Hearers in the Burrough and Parish of *Kederminster.*

Men and Brethren,

THE *Eternal God that made you for a life Everlasting, and hath Redeemed you by his only Son, when you had lost it and your selves, being mindful of you in your sin and misery, hath indited the Gospel, and sealed it by his Spirit, and commanded his Ministers to preach it to the world, that*

pardon being freely offered you, and Heaven being set before you, he might call you off from your fleshly pleasures, and from following after this deceitful world, and acquaint you with the Life that you were Created and Redeemed for, before you are dead and past remedy. He sendeth not you Prophets or Apostles, that receive their message by immediate Revelation; but yet he calleth you by his ordinary Ministers, who are Commissioned by him to preach the same Gospel which Christ and his Apostles first delivered. The Lord standeth over you, and seeth how you forget him and your latter end, and how light you make of Everlasting things, as men that understand not what they have to do or suffer: He seeth how bold you are in sin, and how fearless of his threatnings, and how careless of your souls, and how the works of Infidels are in your lives, while the belief

belief of Christians is in your mouthes. He seeth the dreadful day at hand, when your sorrows will begin, and you must lament all this with fruitless cryes in torment and desperation, and when the remembrance of your folly will tear your hearts, if true Conversion now prevent it not. In Compassion of your sinful miserable souls, the Lord that better knows your case then you can know it, hath made it our duty to speak to you in his name, (2 Corinth. 5. 19.) *and to tell you plainly of your sin and misery, and what will be your end, and how sad a change you'l shortly see, if yet you go on a little longer. Having bought you at so dear a rate as the blood of his Son Jesus Christ, and made you so free and general a promise of pardon, and grace, and everlasting glory, he commandeth us to tender all this to you, as the gift of God, and to intreat you to consider*

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of the neceſſity and worth of what he offereth. He ſeeth and pittieth you, while you are drowned in worldly cares and pleaſures, and eagerly following childiſh toyes, and waſting that ſhort and precious time for a thing of nought, in which you ſhould make ready for an everlaſting life: and therefore he hath commanded us to call after you, and tell you, how you loſe your labour, and are about to loſe your ſouls, and to tell you what greater and better things you might certainly have, if you would hearken to his Call, (Iſaiah 55. 1, 2, 3.) *We believe and obey the voyce of God; and come to you daily on his meſſage, who hath charged us to preach and be inſtant with you in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, and to lift up our voyce like a Trumpet, and ſhew you your Tranſgreſſions and your ſins,* Iſa. 58. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *But, wo and alas! to the grief of*

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our ſouls, and your own undoing, you ſtop your ears, you ſtiffen your necks, you harden your hearts, and break our hearts, and ſend us back to God with groans, to tell him that we have done his meſſage, but can do no good on you, nor ſcarcely get a ſober hearing. O that our eyes were as a Fountain of tears, that we might lament our ignorant careleſs people, that have Chriſt before them, and pardon, and life, and heaven before them, and have not hearts to know and value them! that might have Chriſt, and grace, and glory, as well as others, if it were not for their wilful negligence and contempt! O that the Lord would fill our hearts with more compaſſion to theſe miſerable ſouls, that we might caſt our ſelves even at their feet, and follow them to their houſes, and ſpeak to them with our bitter tears: *For long have we preached to many of them as in vain; we ſtudy*

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plainneſs *to make them* underſtand; *and many of them* will not underſtand *us*. *We ſtudy ſerious piercing words, to make them* feel, *but they* will not feel. *If the* Greateſt *matter would work with them, we ſhould* awake *them: If the* ſweeteſt *things would work, we ſhould* entice *them and win their hearts: if the moſt* dreadfull *things would work, we ſhould at leaſt* affright *them from their wickedneſs: If* Truth *and* Certainty *would take with them, we ſhould ſoon* convince *them: if the God that made them, and the Chriſt that bought them might be heard, the caſe would ſoon be altered with them: if* Scripture *might be heard, we ſhould ſoon prevail: if* Reaſon, *even the beſt and ſtrongeſt Reaſon might be heard, we ſhould not doubt but we ſhould ſpeedily convince them: if* Experience *might be heard, even their* own *experience, and the experience*

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of all the world, the matter would be mended. Yea if the Conſcience within them might be heard, the caſe would be better with them then it is. But if nothing can be heard, what then ſhall we do for them? If the dreadful God of Heaven be ſlighted, who then ſhall be regarded? If the ineſtimable Love and blood of a Redeemer be made light of, what then ſhall be valued? If Heaven have no deſireable Glory with them, and everlaſting Joyes be nothing worth; if they can jeſt at Hell, and dance about the bottomleſs pit, and play with the conſuming fire, and that when God and man do warn them of it: what ſhall we do for ſuch ſouls as theſe?

Once more in the name of the God of Heaven, I ſhall do the Meſſage to you which he hath commanded us, and leave it in theſe ſtanding lines to convert you or condemn you; to change you, or to riſe up in Judge-

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ment against you, and to be a witness to your faces, that once you had a ferious Call to Turn. Hear all you that are the drudges of the world, and the servants of the flesh and Satan! That spend your daies in looking after prosperity on earth, and drown your conscience in drinking, and gluttony, and idleness, and foolish sports; and know you sin, and yet will sin, as if you set God at defiance, and bid him do his worst and spare not! Hearken all you that mind not God, and have no heart to holy things, and feel no savour in the Word or Worship of the Lord, or in the thoughts or mention of eternal life! that are careless of your immortal souls, and never bestowed one hour in enquiring what case they are in, whether sanctified or unsanctified, and whether you are ready to appear before the Lord! Hearken all you that by sinning in the Light, have sinned your selves

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into Atheism and Infidelity, and do not believe the Word of God. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear the Gracious and yet Dreadful Call of God! His eye is all this while upon you. Your sins are registred, and you shall surely hear of them all again; God keepeth the Book now, and he will write it all out upon your Consciences with his terrours: and then you also shall keep it your selves. O sinners, that you knew but what you are doing! and who you are all this while offending! The Sun it self is darkness before the glory of that Majesty which you daily abuse and carelesly provoke. The sinning Angels were not able to stand before him, but were cast down to be tormented with Devils. And dare such silly worms as you, so fearlesly offend, and set your selves against your Maker! O that you did but a little know, what a case that wretched soul is

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in, that hath engaged the Living God againſt him! *The word of his mouth that made thee can unmake thee: the frown of his face will cut thee off, and caſt thee out into utter darkneſs.* *How eager are the Devils to be doing with thee that have tempted thee, and do but wait for the word from God, to take and uſe thee as their own? and then in a moment thou wilt be in Hell.* *If God be againſt thee, all things are againſt thee: this world is but thy priſon, for all that thou ſo loveſt it: thou art but reſerved in it to the day of wrath* (Job 21. 30.) *Thy Judge is coming, thy ſoul is even going.* *Yet a little while, and thy Friends ſhall ſay of thee,* He is dead! *and thou ſhalt ſee the things that thou now doſt deſpiſe, and feel that which now thou wilt not believe.* *Death will bring ſuch an Argument as thou canſt not anſwer: An Argument that ſhall effectual-*

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ly confute thy Cavils against the Word and Wayes of God, and all thy self-conceited dotages. And then how soon will thy mind be changed? Then be an unbeliever if thou canst; stand then to all thy former words which thou wast wont to utter against the Scriptures, or against a holy and a heavenly life. Make good that cause then before the Lord, which thou wast wont to plead against thy Teachers, and against the people that feared God. Then stand to thy old opinions, and contemptuous thoughts of the diligence of the Saints: Make ready now thy strongest Reasons, and stand up then before the Judge, and plead like a man, for thy fleshly, thy worldly, and ungodly life. But know that thou must have one to plead with that will not be out-faced by thee, nor so easily put off as we thy fellow-Creatures. O poor deceived wretched soul! there is nothing but a slender

der vail of flesh betwixt thee and that amazing sight, which will quickly silence thee, and turn thy tune, and make thee of another mind! As soon as Death hath drawn this curtain, thou shalt see that which will quickly leave thee speechless. And how quickly will that day and hour come? When thou hast had but a few more merry hours, and but a few more pleasant draughts and morsels, and a little more of the honours or riches of the world, thy portion will be spent, and thy pleasures ended, and all is then gone that thou settest thy heart upon; of all that thou soldst thy Saviour and Salvation for, there's nothing left but the heavy reckoning. As a thief, that sits merrily drinking the mony in an Ale-house which he hath stoln, when men are riding in post haste to apprehend him; so is it with you. While you are drowned in cares or fleshly pleasures, and making merry

merry with your own ſhame, death is coming in poſt haſte to ſeize upon you, and carry your ſouls to ſuch a place and ſtate, as now you little know or think of. Suppoſe when you are bold and buſie in your ſin, that a meſſenger were but coming poſt from London to apprehend you, and take away your lives: though you ſaw him not, yet if you knew that he was coming, it would marr your mirth, and you would be thinking of the haſte he makes, and hearkning when he knocked at your door: O that you could but ſee what haſte death makes, though yet it have not overtaken you! No poſt ſo ſwift! No meſſenger more ſure! As ſure as the Sun will be with you in the morning, though it hath many thouſands, and hundred thouſand miles to go in the night: ſo ſure will death be quickly with you, and then where is your ſport and pleaſure! then will you jeſt and brave it out!

Then

Then *will you jear at them that warned you ?* Then *is it better to be a Believing Saint, or a ſenſual Worldling ?* And then whoſe ſhall all thoſe things be *that you have gathered ?* (Luke 12. 19, 20, 21.) *Do you not obſerve that dayes and weeks are quickly gone, and nights and mornings come apace, and ſpeedily ſucceed each other ?* You *ſleep, but your* Damnation ſlumbereth not; You *linger*, but your Judgement this long time lingereth not: (2 Pet. 2. 3,4,5.) *to which* you are reſerved for puniſhment (2 *Pet.* 2.8,9.) O that you were wiſe to underſtand this, and that you did conſider your latter end! *Deut.* 32.29. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear the *Call of God in this day of his ſalvation.*

O careleſs ſinners, that you did but know the Love that you unthankfully neglect, and the preciouſneſs of the blood of Chriſt which

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you despise! O that you did but know the riches of the Gospel! Oh that you did but know, a little *know, the Certainty, and the Glory, and blessedness of that everlasting Life, which now you will not set your hearts upon, nor be perswaded first and diligently to seek!* (Heb. 11. 6. & 12. 28. Mat. 6. 33.) *Did you but know the endless Life with God which you now neglect, how quickly would you cast away your sin! how quickly would you change your mind and life, your course and company, and turn the stream of your affections, and lay out your care another way? How resolutely would you scorn to yield to such temptations as now deceive you, and carry you away? How zealously would you bestir your selves for that most blessed life? How earnest would you be with God in Prayer? How diligent in hearing, and learning, and enquiring? how serious in meditating on*

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the Laws of God? (Psal. 1.2.) *How fearful of sinning in thought, word or deed? and how careful to please God, and grow in Holiness? O what a changed people you would be! And why should not the certain Word of God be believed by you, and prevail with you, which openeth to you these glorious and eternal things?*

Yea let me tell you, that even here on earth, you little know the difference between the life which you refuse, and the Life which you choose? The Sanctified are conversing with God, when you dare scarce think of him, and when you are conversing but with earth and flesh. Their Conversation is in heaven, when you are utter strangers to it, and your belly is your God, and you are minding earthly things, Phil. 3. 18, 19, 20. *They are seeking after the face of God, when you seek for nothing higher then this world. They*

are busily laying out for an endless life, where they shall be equal with the Angels, (Luke 20. 36.) *when you take up with a shadow, and a transitory thing of nought. How low and base is your earthly, fleshly, sinfull life, in comparison of the noble spiritual life of true Believers? Many a time have I looked on such men with grief and pitty, to see them trudge about the world and spend their lives, and care, and labour for nothing but a little food and rayment, or a little fading pelf, or fleshly pleasure, or airy Honors, as if they had no higher things to mind. What difference is there between the lives of these men, and of the beasts that perish, that spend their time in working, and eating, and living but that they may live? You taste not of the inward heavenly Pleasures which Believers taste and live upon. I had rather have a little of their*

comfort, which the fore-thoughts of their heavenly Inheritance doth afford them, though I had all their Scorns and Sufferings with it, then to have all your pleasures and treacherous Prosperity: I would not have one of your secret gripes and pangs of conscience, and dark and dreadfull thoughts of death, and the Life to come, for all that ever the world hath done for you, or all that you can reasonably hope that it should do. If I were in your Unconverted Carnal state, and knew but what I know, and believed but what I now believe, methinks my life would be a fore-taste of Hell: How oft should I be thinking of the Terrors of the Lord, and of the dismal day that's hasting on! Sure, Death and Hell would be still before me. I should think of them by day, and dream of them by night; I should lie down in fear, and rise in fear, and live in fear,

fear, leſt death ſhould come before I were Converted. I ſhould have ſmall felicity in any thing that I poſſeſſed; and little pleaſure in any company, and little joy in any thing in the world, as long as I knew my ſelf to be under the Curſe and Wrath of God; I ſhould be ſtill afraid of hearing that voice, Luke 12. 20. [Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee.] *And that fearful ſentence would be written upon my conſcience,* Iſa. 48. 22. and 57. 21. [there is no peace ſaith my God to the wicked.] *O poor ſinners! it is a joyfuller life then this that you might live, if you were but* willing, *but* truly willing to hearken to Chriſt, *and come home to God. You might then draw near to God with boldneſs, and call him your* Father, *and comfortably truſt him with your ſouls and bodies. If you look upon* Promiſes, *you may ſay,* They are all

mine. *If upon the curse, you may say,* [From this I am delivered!] *When you read the Law, you may see what you are saved from; when you read the Gospel, you may see him that redeemed you, and see the course of his Love, and holy Life, and sufferings, and trace him in his temptations, tears and blood, in the work of your salvation; You may see death conquered, and Heaven opened, and your Resurrection and Glorification provided for in the Resurrection and Glorification of your Lord. If you look on the Saints, you may say,* [They are my Brethren and Companions.] *If on the unsanctified, you may rejoyce to think that you are saved from that state. If you look upon the Heavens, the Sun, and Moon, and Stars innumerable, you may think and say,* [My Fathers face is infinitely more glorious; Its higher matters that he hath prepared for his

his Saints: Yonder is but the outward Court of Heaven. The bleſſedneſs that he hath promiſed me is ſo much higher, that fleſh and blood cannot behold it.] *If you think of the grave, you may remember that the* Glorified Spirit, a Living Head, and a Loving Father *have all ſo near Relation to your Duſt, that it cannot be forgotten or neglected, but will more certainly revive, then the plants and flowers in the Spring; becauſe that the ſoul is ſtill alive, that is the Root of the* Body; *and* Chriſt *is alive, that is the* Root *of both. Even death, which is the King of fears, may be remembred and entertained with joy: as being the day of your deliverance from the Remnants of ſin and ſorrow, and the day which you believed, and hoped, and waited for, when you ſhall ſee the bleſſed things which you had heard of, and ſhall find by preſent joyful*

experience, what it was to choose the better part, and to be a sincere believing Saint. What say you Sirs? is not this a more delightfull life to be assured of salvation, and ready to die, then to live as the ungodly that have their hearts overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day comes upon them unawares? *Luke* 21. 34, 36. *Might you not live a comfortable life, if once you were made the Heirs of Heaven, and sure to be saved when you leave the world? O look about you then, and think what you do, and cast not away such hopes as these for very nothing. The flesh and world can give you no such Hopes or Comforts.*

And besides all the misery that you bring upon your selves, you are the troublers of others as long as you are Unconverted. You trouble Magistrates to rule you by their

Laws.

Laws. You trouble Miniſters by reſiſting the light and guidance which they offer you: Your ſin and miſery is the greateſt grief and trouble to them in the world. You trouble the Common-wealth, and draw the Judgements of God upon us: Its you that moſt diſturb the holy peace and order of the Churches, and hinder our Union and Reformation, and are the ſhame and trouble of the Churches where you intrude, and of the places where you are. Ah Lord! How heavy and ſad a caſe is this, that even in England *where the Goſpel doth abound, above any other Nation in the world, where teaching is ſo plain and common, and all the helps we can deſire are at hand; when the ſword hath been hewing us, and Judgement hath run as a fire through the Land; when deliverances have relieved us, and ſo many admirable mercies have engaged us*

to God and to the Gospel, and an holy life, that yet after all this, our Cities and Towns and Countries should abound with multitudes of unsanctified men, and swarm with so much sensuality as everywhere to our grief we see. One would have thought that after all this Light, and all this experience, and all these Judgements and Mercies of God, the people of this Nation should have joyned together as one man to Turn to the Lord; and should have come to their godly Teacher, and lamented all their former sins, and desired him to joyn with them in publique humiliation, to confess them openly, and beg pardon of them from the Lord, and should have craved his Instruction for the time to come, and be glad to be ruled by the Spirit within, and the Ministers of Christ without, according to the Word of God. One would think that after such reason and Scripture

pture evidence as they hear, and after all these means and Mercies, there should not be an ungodly person left among us, nor a worldling, or a Drunkard, or a hater of Reformation, or an enemy to holiness be found in all our Towns or Countries. If we be not all agreed about some Ceremonies or Forms of Government, one would think that before this, we should have been all agreed to live a holy and heavenly life, in obedience to God, his Word and Ministers, and in Love and Peace with one another. But, alas, How far are our people from this course! most of them in most places do set their hearts on earthly things, and seek not first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof; *but look at holiness as a needless thing; Their Families are prayerless, or else a few heartless lifeless words must serve instead of hearty fervent day-*

ly prayers; their children are not taught the knowledge of Christ, and the Covenant of Grace, nor brought up in the Nurture of the Lord, though they falsly promised all this in their Baptism. They instruct not their servants in the matters of salvation, but so their work be done, they care not. There are more oaths, and curses, and ribbald or railing speeches in their Families, then gracious words that tend to edification. How few are the Families that fear the Lord, and enquire at his Word and Ministers how they should live, and what they should do, and are willing to be taught and ruled, and that heartily look after everlasting Life? And those few that God hath made so happy, are commonly the By-word of their Neighbours; when we see some live in drunkennes, and some in pride and worldlines, and most of them have little care of their salvation, though

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the cauſe be groſs, and paſt all controverſie, yet will they hardly be convinced of their miſery, and more hardly recovered and reformed: But when we have done all that we are able to ſave them from their ſins, we leave the moſt of them as we find them. And if according to the Law of God, we caſt them out of the Communion of the Church, when they have obſtinately rejected all our admonitions, they rage at us as if we were their enemies, and their hearts are filled with malice againſt us, and they will ſooner ſet themſelves againſt the Lord, and his Laws and Church, and Miniſters, then againſt their deadly ſins. This is the dolefull caſe of England. *We have Magiſtrates that countenance the ways of Godlineſs; and an happy opportunity for Unity and Reformation is before us, and faithfull Miniſters long to ſee the right ordering of the Church, and of ths*

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Ordinances of God; but the power of sin in our people doth frustrate almost all. Nowhere almost can a faithful Minister set up the unquestionable Discipline of Christ, or put back the most scandalous impenitent sinners from the Communion of the Church, and participation of the Sacraments, but the most of the people rail at them, and revile them; as if these ignorant careless souls were wiser then their Teachers, or then God himself, and fitter to rule the Church then they. And thus in the day of our visitation, when God calls upon us to Reform his Church, though Magistrates seem willing, and faithful Ministers are willing, yet are the multitude of the people still unwilling, and sin hath so blinded them and hardcded their hearts, that even in these days of Light and Grace, they are the obstinate enemies of Light and Grace, and will not be brought by the Calls

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of God, to ſee their folly, and know what is for their good. O that the people of England knew at leaſt in this their day the things that belong unto their peace, before they are hid from their eyes! *Luke* 19.42.

O fooliſh miſerable ſouls! (Gal. 3.1.) who hath bewitched your *minds into ſuch madneſs, and your hearts into ſuch a deadneſs, that you ſhould be ſuch mortal enemies to your ſelves, and go on ſo obſtinately towards damnation, that neither the Word of God, nor the perſwaſions of men can change your minds, or hold your hands, or ſtop you till you are paſt remedy! Well, ſinners! this life will not laſt alwayes; this patience will not wait upon you ſtill. Do not think that you ſhall abuſe your Maker and Redeemer, and ſerve his enemies, and debaſe your ſouls, and trouble the world, and wrong the Church, and reproach the*

godly,

godly, and grieve your Teachers, and hinder Reformation, and all this upon free coſt. You know not yet what this muſt coſt you; but you muſt ſhortly know, when the righteous God ſhall take you in hand, who will handle you in another manner then the ſharpeſt Magiſtrates, or the plaineſt dealing Paſtors did, unleſs you prevent the everlaſting torments by a ſound Converſion, and a ſpeedy obeying of the Call of God. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear, *while Mercy hath a voice to call!*

One deſperate Objection (which I have after touched, but with too much brevity) I find ſtick cloſe to the hearts of many ungodly men. They think that God doth not ſo much care what men think or ſay, or do, as we perſwade them, and therefore they care ſo little themſelves. *For the convincing of ſuch Atheiſtical men as theſe, I ſhall propound*

pound these following Questions.

1. *Dost thou think God* careth whether thou be a man or not? *If not, Who made thee and preserveth thee? If he do, then sure he careth whether thou* behave thy self as a man. *No man is so foolish as to make any Instrument, or build an House, or a Ship, and not to care when he hath done, whether it be good for the use he made it for. Do not for shame then impute such folly to the God of Wisdom, as if he made so noble a Creature as man, and endowed him with such noble faculties, and all for nothing; and careth not what becometh of him when he hath done. Why should God give thee a mind that can know him, and a heart that can love him, if he cared not whether thou know him, and love him or not? Do you not see that in the course of nature every thing is fitted to its use? the* Beasts *know not God, nor*

are

are capable of loving him, because they were made for no such use; but thy Capacity *shews that thou wast made for God, and for a life to come.*

2. *Dost thou think that God is* everywhere present, and Infinite, and Al-sufficient? *If not, thou dost not believe that he is God: And it is unreasonable to imagine that God hath made a world that is greater and more extensive or comprehensive then himself; for none can communicate more then he hath. But if thou art forced to confess that God is everywhere, and as sufficient for every single man, as if he had never another creature to regard, you must needs confess then that he is not careless of the hearts and ways of the sons of men; For they are things that are still before his eyes. It is base and blasphemous thoughts of God, as if he were limited, absent, or insufficient, that*

makes

makes men think him so regardless of their hearts and ways.

3. *Dost thou think that God* careth what becoms of thy body? *Whether thou be sick or well? Whether thou live or die? If not, then how comest thou by thy life, and health and mercies? If they come from any other fountain, tell us from whence; Is it not to God that thou prayest for life and health? Darest thou say to him,* I will not depend upon thee? I will not be beholden to thee for the life and mercies of another day? *If so, then thou art a blinded Atheist. But if thou think God cares for thy body, canst thou think he cares not more for thy soul? If he must regard to furnish thee with Mercies, he will sure have a regard whether thou Love and Live to him that gave them.*

4. *Dost thou believe that* God is the Governor of the world or not?

not? *If not, then there can be* no rightfull Government. *For as no Justice of Peace can have Power but from the Soveraign, so no Soveraign can have Power but from God, nor be a lawfull Governour but under him. And then all the world would be turned into confusion. But if thou must needs confess that God is the Governour of the world, what an unwise, unrighteous Governour wouldst thou make him, if thou think that he regarded not the hearts and wayes of those whom he doth govern? This still is but to deny him to be God.*

5. *If God do not care so much what is in our hearts, or what we do,* Why then should he make a Law for our hearts, and words, and ways? *Would he* command *us that which he doth not care for? Would he so strictly* forbid *us sin, if he were indifferent whether we sin or not? Would he* promise *eternal life to the holy*

holy and obedient, if he care not whether we be holy and obedient or no? Would he threaten *Hell to all that are ungodly, if he cared not whether we were godly or not? Durest thou say that the Almighty Holy God is fain to rule the world by a Lye, and to deceive men into obedience? Yea the very Law of nature it self doth contain not only* Precepts *of our duty, but the hopes and fears of a life to come, without which the world could not be governed! And certainly they are no deceits, by which an infinite Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness doth govern the world.*

6. *If God did not much regard our hearts and lives, why doth* he make all the world to be our Servants? *Doth he give us Sun, and Moon, and Stars, the earth and all the Creatures to attend us, and serve us with their lives and virtues, and yet doth he not care for*

our

our hearts or ſervice? This is as fouliſh as to ſay, that he hath made all the world in vain, and careth not for it now he hath made it.

7. *If he cared not for the frame of our hearts and lives, he would not have ſent his* Son to redeem us, *and to cleanſe us from all iniquity, and ſanctifie us a peculiar people to himſelf,* Titus 2. 14. *Surely the price that was paid for ſinners, and the wonderful deſign of God in our Redemption, doth ſhew that he makes not light of ſin, and that he is wonderfully in love with holineſs.*

8. *If God did not regard our hearts and lives, he would not have made it the* office of his Miniſters to call us daily to Repentance and an holy life; *Nor commanded them to make ſuch a ſtir with ſinners to win them unto God; He would not have appointed all his Ordinances, publique and private alſo to this end. Doth God command all this*

ado

ado for a thing that he regards not?

9. *Nor would he* punish *the world with* Hell hereafter, *or so many* dreadfull Judgements here, *as thousands feel, if he cared not what they think or do. Methinks men that are so often groaning under his Rod, should feel that he looks after their hearts and ways.*

10. *And how can the* Holy Ghost be our Sanctifier *if God be so indifferent whether we be clean or unclean? Dare you think that the Holy Ghost doth take upon him a needless work?*

11. *Methinks you might perceive even in the* malice of the Tempter, *that God is holy, and hateth iniquity; and his Word is true that telleth us of the eternal punishment of sin. This Scripture tels us of the Angels fall, and that many of them are become Devils by their sin, and are malicious enemies*

enemies of mans salvation. And do you not easily perceive it to be true? How come they else to be such importunate Tempters of men, which we feel, alas, by too much experience? Or if this evidence be not palpable enough to convince the Infidel, how come they to make so many bargains with Conjurers and Witches, to draw them from God and Salvation, as they have done? How come they to appear in terrible shapes to so many as they have done, and still upon designs that declare their own dejected base condition, and their enmity to God and man, and their eager desire to engage men in a way of sin? If any Infidel will not believe that really there have been Witches and Apparitions, *and consequently that there are Devils who are miserable and malicious spirits, who by sin are cast out of the favour of God, and would draw men into their miserable*

case,

eaſe, let them come and reaſon the eaſe with me, and I ſhall quietly tell them of ſo many, ſure, undeniable inſtances, and give them ſo much proof of the truth of it, as ſhall leave them nothing to ſay againſt it, unleſs they will ſtill ſay [We will not believe,] *Yea ſo much, as that I will not be beholden to the vileſt Atheiſt or Infidel to believe it, if he will not quite renounce his Reaſon, but give it leave to ſee the Light.*

12. *Laſtly, If yet you think that God (the Soveraign Ruler of the world, that is everywhere preſent, and preſerveth all) doth care ſo little what men are, or what they do, whether they are holy or unholy, obedient or diſobedient to his Laws, then methinks that you your ſelves, and all the reſt of your fellow-creatures ſhould little care. Two Queſtions therefore I muſt here propound to you.* 1. *Do not you care what men*

men ſay of you, or do to you? Are you contented that men ſlander you and abuſe you, or ſet your houſes or Towns on fire, or deſtroy your Cattel, or Wives and Children, and impriſon, wound or kill your ſelves? If you will make a great matter of what men ſay or do againſt you, can you be ſo mad (for it is no better) as to think that the Omnipotent, Holy God ſhould little regard whats ſaid or done againſt himſelf, and againſt his ſervants, and that by ſuch ſilly worms as men, that are his Work-manſhip? Did not ſelfiſhneſs make you blind and partial, you would know that one ſin againſt God, deſerves more puniſhment, then ten thouſand thouſand times as much againſt ſuch ſilly things as you. Do you make no matter of difference between a bad ſervant and a good? an obedient and a diſobedient child? a ſon that would lay down his life for you, anh a Son

that

that longs for your death that he may have your Land? between a faithfull friend and a deadly enemy? If you do not, you are not men, but something else in humane shape. If you do, then you are somewhat worse then men, if yet you would have the Blessed God to make no great difference between those that love him above all the world, and those that regard him not; between the Holy and unholy soul.

And 2. I would ask you, Whether you would have the Rulers of the world to take no care what men say or do, or would you not? If not, then you would have all the world turned loose, and you would have every man that is poorer then you, have leave to rob you: and every man that hateth you, have leave to beat you, or to kill you; and every man that liketh your House, or Lands, or Goods, or Cattle, to have leave to take them from you; and every man to defile your

wives or daughters that hath a mind to it? And so we should see whither it is that Infidelity leads men. But if you like not this, then you are most unreasonable, if you would have Magistrates to be regardfull of mens Actions, and not God: If Magistrates must hang men for wronging you, and the Eternal Majesty must not punish them for wronging him, and breaking his Laws, which is infinitely a greater matter. As if you would have a Constable punish men, and the King or Judge to have no regard of it. For Kings are under God, as Constables are under Kings; and a thousand fold lower.

The Truth is, wicked men are fallen so far from God to themselves, that they are as Gods to themselves, in their own esteem, and besides themselves they know no God: and therefore any wrong that is done against them, or any good that is done

done for them, they would have regarded: but the wrong and disobedience that is against God, *they would have nothing made of. And they have such narrow blasphemous thoughts of God, as if he were a finite Creature like themselves, that can be but in one place at once, that makes them so blaspheme his Providence, and think he minds not Good or Evil, and will not reward the godly, or punish the ungodly; but were like the Idols of the Heathen, that have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and hands without an executive power. But when the Memorial Book of God is opened, which is written for them that fear the Lord, and think upon his name, and when the Lord shall say of them,* These are mine, *as he is making up his Jewels, and spareth them as a man spareth his Son that serveth him, then shall (these Infidels) return (to their Wits) and the*

righteous shall return from their fears and sufferings, and shall discern between the Righteous and the Wicked, between those that served God, and those that served him not, Mal. 3. 16, 17, 18.

Another Objection I find most common in the mouths of the ungodly, especially of late years; They say, [We can do nothing without God; We cannot have Grace, if God will not give it us: and if he will, we shall quickly Turn: If he have not predestinated us, and will not turn us, how can we Turn our selves or be saved? It is not in him that wills, nor in him that runs;] *And thus they think they are excused.*

I have answered this formerly, and in this book; but let me now say this much. 1. Though you cannot cure your selves, you can hurt and poison your selves. It is God that must sanctifie *your hearts; but who* corrupted

rupted *them? Will you wilfully take poison, because you cannot cure your selves? Methinks you should the more forbear it. You should the more take heed of sinning, if you cannot mend what sin doth marr.* 2. *Though you cannot be converted without the special Grace of God, yet you must know that God giveth this Grace in the use of his holy means which he hath appointed to that end; and common Grace may enable you to forbear your gross sinning (as to the outward act) and to use those means. Can you truly say that you do as much as you are able to do? Are you not able to go by an Ale-house door; or to shut your mouths, and keep out the drink; or to forbear the company that hardneth you in sin? Are you not able to go hear the word, and think of what you heard when you come home, and to consider with your selves of your own condition, and of everlasting*

things? Are you not able to read good Books from day to day, at leaſt on the Lords day, and to converſe with thoſe that fear the Lord? You cannot ſay that you have done what you were able. 3. *And therefore you muſt know that you can* forfeit *the Grace and help of God by your wilfull ſinning or negligence, though you cannot without Grace turn to God. If you will not do what you can, its juſt with God to deny you that Grace by which you might do more.* 4. *And for Gods Decrees, you muſt know that they ſeparate not the end and means; but tye them together. God never decreed to ſave any but the ſanctified, nor to damn any but the unſanctified. God doth as truly decree from Everlaſting whether your Land this year ſhall be barren or fruitful, and juſt how long you ſhall live in the world, as he hath Decreed whether you ſhall be ſaved or not. And yet you would think*

think that man but a fool that would forbear plowing and ſowing, and ſay, If God have Decreed that my ground ſhall bear corn, it will bear, whether I plough and ſow or not. If God have decreed that I ſhall live, I ſhall live, whether I eat or not; but if he have not, it is not eating that will keep me alive. *Do you know how to anſwer ſuch a man, or do you not? If you do, then you know how to anſwer your ſelves; for the caſe is alike: Gods decree is as peremptory about your bodies as your ſouls. If you* do not, *then try firſt theſe concluſions upon your bodies, before you venture to try them on your ſouls: ſee firſt whether God will keep you alive without food or rayment, and whether he will give you corn without tillage and labour, and whether he will bring you to your journeys end without your travel or carriage: and if you ſpeed well in this, then*

try whether he will bring you to Heaven without your diligent use of means, and sit down, and say, we cannot sanctifie our selves.

And for the point of Free-will *which you harp so long upon, Divines are not so much disagreed about it, as you imagine.* Augustine *as well as* Pelagius, Calvin *as well as* Arminius, *the* Dominicans *as well as the* Jesuits, *all do generally maintain that man hath Free-will: that the Orthodox say, that Free-will is corrupted and disposed to evil.* Epiphanius *condemned* Origen *for saying, that man had lost the Image of God, and makes it a point of Heresie. And yet one may truly say,* that man hath lost Gods Image, *and* another *may truly say that* he hath not lost it. *For there is a two-fold Image of God on man; the one is* Natural, *and that is, Our* Reason *and* Free-will, *and this is not lost. The other is* Qualitative

litative *and* Ethical, *and this is our* Holineſs, *and this is loſt, and by Grace reſtored; No man of brains denyeth that man hath a Will that's Naturally free; Its free from violence, and its a ſelf determining Principle. But it is not free from evil Diſpoſitions. It is habitually averſe to God and Holineſs, and enclined to earthly fleſhly things. It is enſlaved by a ſinfull Byas. This no man me thinks that is a Chriſtian ſhould deny; and of the Aged, I ſee not how an Infidel can deny it. Alas, we eaſily confeſs to you, that you have not this ſpiritual Moral Free Will, which is but your right inclination, and your habitual Willingneſs it ſelf. If you had a Will that were freed from wicked Inclinations, I had no need to write ſuch Books as this to perſwade you to be willing in a caſe which your own ſalvation lyeth on. To the grief of our ſouls, we perceive after all*

our preaching and perſwaſions, that the ungodly have not this ſpiritual free-will. But this is nothing, but your willingneſs it ſelf, and inclination to be willing, and therefore the want of it is ſo far from excuſing you, that the more you want it (that is, the more you are wilful in ſin) the worſe you are, and the ſorer will be your puniſhment. And our preaching and perſwaſion, and your hearing and conſidered, are the appointed means to get this Moral Power or Freedom, that is, to make you truly willing.

Well, Sirs, I have but three Requeſts to you, and I have done. Firſt, That you will ſeriouſly read over this ſmall Treatiſe: (and if you have ſuch as need it in your Families, that you would read it over and over to them: and if thoſe that fear God would go now and then to their ignorant Neighbours, and read this or ſome other Book to them of this Subject, they might be a means

of

of winning of ſouls.) If we cannot intreat ſo ſmall a Labour of men for their own ſalvation, as to read ſuch ſhort Inſtructions as theſe, they ſet little by themſelves, and will moſt juſtly periſh. Secondly, When you have read over this Book, I would intreat you to go alone, and ponder a little what you have read, and bethink you, as in the ſight of God, whether it be not true, and do not nearly touch your ſouls, and whether it be not time for you to look about you. And alſo I intreat you, that you will upon your knees beſeech the Lord that he will open your eyes to underſtand the Truth, and turn your hearts to the Love of God, and beg of him all that ſaving Grace that you have ſo long neglected, and follow it on from day to day, till your hearts be changed. And withall that you will go to your Paſtors (that are ſet over you to take care of the health and ſafety of your

ſouls,

souls, as Physitians do for the health of your bodies) *and desire them to direct you what course to take, and acquaint them with your spiritual estate, that you may have the benefit of their Advice and Ministerial help. Or if you have not a faithful Pastor at home, make use of some other, in so great a need. Thirdly, When by Reading, Consideration, Prayer and Ministerial Advice, you are once acquainted with your sin and misery, with your Duty and Remedy, delay not, but presently forsake your sinfull company and courses, and turn to God, and obey his Call. As you love your souls, take heed that you go not on against so loud a Call of God, and against your own Knowledge and Consciences, lest it go worse with you in the day of Judgement, then with* Sodom *and* Gomorrah. *Enquire of God, as a man that is willing to know the truth, and not to be a wilfull cheater*

ter of his ſoul. Search the holy Scriptures daily, and ſee whether theſe things be ſo or not: try impartially whether it be ſafer to truſt to Heaven or Earth, and whether it be better follow God or man, the Spirit or the fleſh, and better live in holineſs or ſin; and whether an unſanctified eſtate be ſafe for you to abide in one day longer: And when you have found out which is beſt, *Reſolve accordingly, and make your choice without any more ado. If you will be true to your own ſouls, and do not love everlaſting torments, I beſeech you as from the Lord, that you will but take this reaſonable Advice. O what happy Towns and Countreys, and what a happy Nation might we have, if we could but perſwade our neighbours to agree to ſuch a neceſſary motion! What joyfull men would all faithfull Miniſters be, if they could but ſee their people truly heavenly*

venly and holy! This would be the Unity, the Peace, the Safety, the Glory of our Churches; the Happiness of our Neighbours, and the comfort of our souls. Then how comfortably should we preach Absolution and Peace to you? and deliver the Sacraments which are the Seals of Peace to you? And with what Love and Joy might we live among you? At your Death-bed, how boldly might we comfort and encourage your departing souls? and at your Burial, how comfortably might we leave you in the Grave, in expectation to meet your souls in heaven, and to see your bodies raised to that Glory?

But if still the most of you will go on in a careless, ignorant, fleshly, worldly, or unholy life, and all our desires and labours cannot so far prevail as to keep you from the wilfull damning of your selves, we must then imitate our Lord, who deligh-

eth

eth himself in those few that are his Jewels, and in the little Flock that shall receive the Kingdom, when the most shall reap the misery which they sowed. In nature excellent things are few: The world hath not many Suns or Moons; Its but a little of the earth that's gold or silver. Princes and Nobles are but a small part of the sons of men. And it is no great number that are Learned, Judicious or Wise here in the world. And therefore if the gate being strait, and the way narrow, there be but few that find salvation, yet God will have his Glory and pleasure in those few. And when Christ shall come with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, his coming will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all true Believers, 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8, 9, 10.

And for the rest, as God the Father

ther vouchsafed to create them, and God the Son disdained not to bear the penalty of their sins upon the Cross, and did not judge such suffering vain, though he knew that by refusing the Sanctification of the holy Ghost, they would finally destroy themselves; so we that are his Ministers, though these be not gathered, judge not our labour wholly lost (see Isa. 49. 5.)

Reader, *I have done with thee,* (*when thou hast perused this Book*) *but sin hath not yet done with thee,* (*even those that thou thoughtest had been forgotten long ago*) *and Satan hath not yet done with thee* (*though now he be out of sight*) *and God hath not yet done with thee, because thou wilt not be perswaded to have done with the deadly ruigning sin. I have written thee this Perswasive, as one that is going into another world, where the things are seen that here I speak of; and as one that knoweth*

thou

thou muſt be ſhortly there thy ſelf. As ever thou wilt meet me with Comfort before the Lord that made us, as ever thou wilt eſcape the everlaſting plagues prepared for the final Neglecters of ſalvation, and for all that are not ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt: *and love not the* Communion of the Saints, *as members of the holy* Catholike Church, *and as ever thou hopeſt to ſee the face of Chriſt the Judge, and of the Majeſty of the Father, with Peace and Comfort, and to be received into glory, when thou art turned naked out of this world, I beſeech thee, I charge thee to* hear *and* obey *the* Call of God, and Reſolvedly to Turn, that thou mayſt live. *But if thou* Wilt not: *even when thou haſt no true reaſon for it, but* Becauſe thou wilt not; *I ſummon thee to anſwer it before the Lord, and require thee there to bear me witneſs that I gave thee warning,*

and

and that thou wast not condemned for want of a Call to turn and Live, *but because thou wouldest not* believe it, *and* obey it: *which also must be the Testimony of*

Thy serious

Monitor

Decemb. 11.
1657.

Rich. Baxter.

The

The Contents.

A Preface to the Unsanctified, exhorting them to Turn, and answering some Objections.

The Text opened, p. 1. to p. 9.

Doct. 1. It is the unchangeable Law of God, that wicked men must Turn or Die, p. 9.

Proved, p. 11.

Object. God will not be so unmerciful as to damn us: Answered, p. 14, 15.

The Use, p. 22.

Who are wicked men, and what Conversion is? and how we may know whether we are wicked or Converted, p. 27. to p. 45. Applyed, p. 45. to p. 70.

Doct.

Doct. 2. It is the Promise of God that the wicked shall live if they will but Turn; that is, unfeignedly and throughly Turn, *p.* 70.
Proved, *p.* 77.
Doct. 3. God taketh pleasure in mens Conversion and salvation, but not in their Death or Damnation: He had rather they would Turn and Live, then go on and die, *p.* 85.
Expounded, *to p.* 93.
Proved, *p.* 93. to *p.* 103.
Doct. 4. The Lord hath confirmed it to us by his Oath, that he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he Turn and Live; that he may leave man no pretence to doubt of it, *p.* 103.
Use. Who is it then that takes pleasure in mens sins and death? Not God, nor Ministers, nor any good men, *p.* 106.
Doct. 5. So earnest is God for the Conversion of sinners, that he doubleth his Commands and Exhortations with vehemency, Turn ye, Turn ye, *p.* 120.
Applyed.
Some motives to obey Gods Call and Turn, *p.* 126.
Doct. 6. The Lord condescendeth to reason the case with Unconverted sinners, and to ask them, Why they will

will die? p.152.
A ſtrange Diſputation. 1. For the Queſtion. 2. The Diſputants.
Wicked men will die, or deſtroy themſelves, p.154.
Uſe. The ſinners cauſe is certainly unreaſonable, p.163.
Their ſeeming Reaſons confuted, p.175.
Queſt. Why are men ſo unreaſonable and loth to turn, and will deſtroy themſelves? p. 200. Anſwered.
Doct. 7. If after all this men will not Turn, it is not long of God that they are condemned, but of themſelves, even of their own wilfulneſs. They die becauſe they will die, that is, becauſe they will not Turn, p.209.
Uſe 1. How unfit the wicked are to charge God with their Damnation. It is not becauſe God is unmerciſull, but becauſe they are cruel and mercileſs to themſelves, p.225.
Object. We cannot convert our ſelves, nor have we Free-will. Anſwered, p. 235. (and in the Preface)
Uſe 2. The ſubtilty of Satan, the deceitfulneſs of ſin, and the folly of ſinners manifeſted, p.238.
Uſe 3. No wonder if the wicked would hinder the Converſion and Salvation of

of others, *p.*240.
Use 4. Man is the greatest enemy to himself, *p.*241.
Mans destruction is of himself, proved, *p.*242.
The hainous aggravations of self-destroying, *p.*257.
The concluding Exhortation, *p.*263.
Ten Directions for those that had rather Turn then Die, *p.*273. *to the end.*

These

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Making light of Christ and Salvation too oft the issue of Gospel Invitations, manifest in a Sermon preached at *Lawrence Jury* in *London*, in 8°.

The Agreement of divers Ministers of Christ in the County of *Worcester* for Catechizing or personal instructing all in their several Parishes that will consent thereunto; containing, 1. The Articles of our Agreement. 2. An Exhortation to the people to submit to this necessary work. 3. The Profession of Faith and Catechism, in 8°.

Gildas Salvianus, the Reformed Pastor, shewing the nature of the Pastoral work,

work, especially in private instruction and Catechizing, in 8°.

Certain Disputations of Right to Sacraments, and the true Nature of visible Christianity, in 4°.

Of Justification; four Disputations clearing, and amicably defending the Truth against the unnecessary Oppositions of divers learned and Reverend Brethren, in 4°.

A Treatise of Conversion preached and now published for the use of those that are strangers to a true Conversion, especially the grosly ignorant and ungodly, 4°.

One Sheet for the Ministry against the Malignants of all sorts.

[illegible]nding Sheet for Popery.

[illegible]et against the Quakers.

A second Sheet for the Ministry, justifying our Calling against Quakers, Seekers and Papists, and all that deny us to be the Ministers of Christ.

Directions to Justices of Peace, especially in Corporations, to the discharge of their Duty to God, written at the Request of a Magistrate, and published for the use of others that need it.

The Crucifying of the world by the Cross of Christ: With a Preface to the Nobles, Gentlemen, and all the Rich, directing them how they may be Richer.

A

A CALL TO THE Unconverted.

Ezek. 33. 11.

Say unto them, As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil wayes; for why will ye die O house of Israel?

IT hath been the astonishing wonder of many a man as well as me, to read in the holy Scripture how *few* will be saved, and that the greatest part

even of those that are *called*, will be everlastingly shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven, and be tormented with the Devils in eternal fire. Infidels believe not this when they read it, and therefore must feel it. Those that do believe it, are forced to cry out with *Paul*, *Rom.* 11. 33. *Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgements, and his waies past finding out!* But nature it self doth teath us all to lay the blame of evil works upon the doers; and therefore when we see any hainous thing done, a principle of Justice doth provoke us to enquire after him that did it, that the evil of the work may return the evil of shame upon the author. If we saw a man killed and cut in pieces by the way, we would presently ask, *Oh who did this cruel deed?* If the Town were wilfully

set

ſet on fire, you would ask, *What wicked wretch did this?* So when we read that the moſt will be firebrands of hell for ever, we muſt needs think with our ſelves, How comes this to paſs? and who is it long of? Who is it that is ſo cruel as to be the cauſe of ſuch a thing as this? And we can meet with few that will own the guilt. It is indeed confeſt by *all* that *Satan* is the cauſe: but that doth not reſolve the doubt, becauſe he is not the principal cauſe. He doth not *force* men to ſin, but *tempt* them to it, and leave it to their own wills whether they will do it or not. He doth not *carry* men to an Alehouſe, and force open their mouths, and pour in the drink; nor doth he hold them that they cannot go to Gods ſervice, nor doth he force their hearts from holy thoughts. It lieth therefore between God himſelf and the ſin-

ner: one of them must needs be the principal cause of all this misery, which ever it is: For there is no other to cast it upon; And *God* disclaimeth it: *He* will not take it upon him. And the *wicked* disclaim it usually, and they will not take it upon them. And this is the Controversie that is here managing in my text.

The Lord complaineth of the *people*; and the *people* think it is long of *God*. The same controversie is handled, *Chap.* 18. where *Verse* 25. they plainly say, that *the way of the Lord is not equal*; and God saith, *It is their wayes that are not equal*. So here they say, *Verse* 19. *If our trangressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how shall we then live?* As if they should say, If we must die and be miserable, how can we help it? As if it were not long of them, but God. But God in my

text

text doth clear himself of it, and telleth them how they may help it if they will, and perswadeth them to use the means; and if they will not be perswaded, he lets them know that it is long of themselves; and if this will not satisfie them, he will not therefore forbear to punish them: It is *He* that will be the Judge: and he will Judge them according to thrir wayes; they are no Judges of him or of themselves; as wanting authority, and wisdom, and impartiality: Nor is it their cavilling and quarrelling with God that shall serve their turn, or save them from the execution of Justice which they murmur at.

The words of this Verse contain, 1. Gods purgation or clearing of himself from the blame of their Destruction. This he doth, not by disowning his Law, that *the wicked shall die*, nor by disown-

ing his Judgement and Execution according to that Law; or giving them any hope that the Law ſhall not be executed; but by profeſſing that it is not their death that he takes pleaſure in, but their *returning* rather, that they may live; And this he confirmeth to them by his Oath. 2. An expreſs Exhortation to the wicked to Return; wherein God doth not only command, but perſwade, and condeſcend alſo to reaſon the caſe with them, Why they will die? The direct End of this Exhortation is, That they may Turn and Live. The Secundary or reſerved ends, upon ſuppoſition that this is not attained, are theſe two. Firſt to convince them by the means which he uſed, that it is not long of God if they be miſerable. Secondly to convince them from their manifeſt wilfulneſs in rejecting all his commands and perſwaſions,

ſwaſions, that it is long of themſelves: and they die, even becauſe they *Will* die.

The ſubſtance of the Text doth lie in theſe obſervations following.

Doct. 1. *It is the unchangeable Law of God that wicked men muſt Turn or Die.*

Doct. 2. *It is the promiſe of God, that the wicked ſhall live if they will but Turn.*

Doct. 3. *God taketh Pleaſure in mens Converſion and Salvation: but not in their Death or Damnation: he had rather they would Return and Live, then go on and die.*

Doct. 4. *This is a moſt certain truth, which becauſe God would not have men to queſtion, he hath confirmed it to them ſolemnly by his Oath.*

Doct. 5. *The Lord doth redouble*

his commands and perſwaſions to the wicked to Turn.

Doct. 6. *The Lord condeſcendeth to reaſon the caſe with them, and asketh the wicked, Why they will die?*

Doct. 7. *If after all this the wicked will not turn, it is not long of God that they periſh, but of themſelves: their own wilfulneſs is the cauſe of their damnation; they therefore die, becauſe they will die.*

Having laid the Text open before your eyes in theſe plain propoſitions, I ſhall next ſpeak ſomewhat of each of them in order; though very briefly.

Doct.

Doct. 1. *IT is the unchangeable Law of God that wicked men must Turn or Die.*

If you will believe God, believe this: There is but one of these two wayes for every wicked man, either Conversion or Damnation. I know the wicked will hardly be perswaded either of the truth or Equity of this. No wonder if the Guilty quarrel with the Law. Few men are apt to believe that which they would not have to be true: and fewer would have that to be true which they apprehend to be against them. But it is not quarrelling with the Law, or with the Judge, that will save the Malefactor. Believing and regarding the Law might have prevented his death: but denying and accusing it will but hasten it. If it were not

ſo an hundred would bring their reaſons *againſt* the Law, for one that would bring his reaſon *to* the Law: and men would rather chooſe to give their reaſons why *they* ſhould not be puniſhed, then to hear the commands and reaſons of their Governors which require them to obey. The Law was not made for you to judge, but that you might be ruled and judged by it.

But if there be any ſo blind as to venture to queſtion, either the Truth or the Juſtice of this Law of God, I ſhall briefly give you that evidence of both, which me thinks ſhould ſatisfie a reaſonable man.

And firſt, if you doubt whether this be the word of God or not, beſides an hundred other Texts, you may be ſatisfied by theſe few. Mat. 18. 3. *Verily I ſay unto you, except ye be converted and become*

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as little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. John 3. 3. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.* 2. Cor. 5. 17. *If a man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: Old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new.* Coloſ. 3. 9, 10. *Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.* Heb. 12. 14. *Without holineſs none ſhall ſee God.* Rom. 8. 8, 9. *So then they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God. Now if any man have not the ſpirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.* Galat. 6. 15. *For in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but a new creature.* 1 Pet. 1. 3. *According to his abundant grace he hath begotten us again to a lively hope.* Verſe 23. *Being born*

again

again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2. *Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* Psalm 9. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God.* Psalm 11. 5. *And the Lord loveth the righteous, but the wicked his soul hateth.*

As I need not stay to open these Texts which are so plain, so I think I need not add any more of that multitude which speak the like: If thou be a man that dost believe the Word of God: here's already enough to satisfie thee, that the wicked must be converted or condemned. You are already brought so far, that you must either confess that this is true, or say plainly, you

you will not believe the Word of God. And if once you become to that pass, there is but small hopes of you: look to your selves as well as you can: for its like you will not be long out of Hell. You would be ready to flie in the face of him that should give *you* the lie: and yet dare you give the lie to God? But if you tell God plainly you will not believe him, blame him not if he never warn you more, or if he forsake you, and give you up as hopeless. For to what purpose should he warn you, if you will not believe him? should he send an Angel from heaven to you, its seems you would not believe. For an Angel can speak but the Word of God: and if an Angel should bring you another Gospel, you are not to receive it, but to hold him accursed; *Gal.* 1. 8. And surely there is no Angel to be believed before the

Son

Son of God, who came from the Father to bring us this Doctrine. If he be not to be believed, then all the Angels in heaven are not to be believed. And if you ſtand on theſe terms with God, I ſhall leave you till he deal with you in a more convincing way. God hath a voice that will make you hear. Though he *intreat* you to hear the voice of his *Goſpel*, he will *make* you hear the voice of his condemning Sentence, without intreaty. We cannot make you *believe* againſt your wills: but God will make you *feel* againſt your wills.

But let us hear what reaſon you have, why you will not believe this word of God, which tells us that the wicked muſt be *Converted or condemned?* I know your reaſon; it is becauſe that you judge it unlikely that God ſhould be ſo unmerciful: you think it cruelty

to

to damn men everlastingly for so small a thing as a sinful life. And this leads us up to the second thing, which is to justifie the *Equity* of God in his Laws and Judgements.

And *first* I think you will not deny but that it is most sutable to an immortal soul, to be ruled by Laws that promise an immortal reward, and threaten an endless punishment. Otherwise the Law should not be suted to the nature of the subject; who will not be fully ruled by any lower means, then the Hopes or Fears of everlasting things: As it is in case of temporal punishment; if a Law were now made that the most hainous crimes shall be punished with an hundred years captivity, this might be of some efficacy, as being equal to our lives. But if there had been no other penalties before the flood, when men lived eight

or

or nine hundred years, it would not have been sufficient, because men would know that they might have so many hundred years impunity afterward. So it is in our present case.

2. I suppose you will confess that the *promise* of an endless and unconceivable glory is not unsuitable to the wisdom of God, or the ease of man. And why then should you not think so of the *Threatning* of an endless and unspeakable misery?

3. When you find it in the Word of God that *so it is*, and *so it will be*, do you think your selves fit to contradict this Word? Will you call your Maker to the Barr? and examine his Word upon the accusation of falshood? will you sit upon him and judge him by the Law of your Conceits? Are you wiser, and better, and righteouser then he? Must the God of hea-

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ven come to School to you to learn wiſdom? Muſt infinite wiſdom learn of folly? and infinite Goodneſs be corrected by a ſwiniſh ſinner, that cannot keep himſelf an hour clean? Muſt the Almighty ſtand at the Bar of a worm? Oh horrid arrogancy of ſenſleſs duſt! Shall every mole, or clod, or dunghill accuſe the Sun of darkneſs, and undertake to illuminate the world? Where were you when the Almighty made theſe Laws, that he did not call you to his Councill? Surely he made them before you were born, without deſiring your advice; and you come into the world too late for to reverſe them: if you could have done ſo great a work, you ſhould have ſtept out of your Nothingneſs, and have contradicted Chriſt when he was on earth, or *Moſes* before him, or have ſaved *Adam* and his ſinfull progeny from the

threatned

threatned death, that so there might have been no need of Christ! And what if God withdraw his patience and sustentation, and let you drop into hell while you are quarrelling with his Word, will you *then* believe that there is an Hell?

4. If sin be such an evil that it requireth the *death of Christ* for its expiation, no wonder if it deserve our everlasting misery.

5. And if the sin of the *Devils* deserved an endless torment, why not also the sin of man?

6. And me thinks you should perceive, that it is not possible for the best of men, much less for the wicked to be competent Judges of the desert of sin. Alas we are all both blind and partial. You can never know fully the desert of sin, till you fully know the evil of sin; and you can never fully know the *evil* of sin, till your fully know,

1. The

1. The Excellency of the *ſoul* which it deformeth. 2. And the excellency of *holineſs* which it doth obliterate. 3. And the reaſon and excellency of the *Law* which it violateth. And 4. The excellency of the *Glory* which it doth deſpiſe. And 5. The excellency and office of *Reaſon* which it treadeth down. 6. No nor till you know the infinite Excellency, Almightineſs and holineſs of that *God* againſt whom it is committed. When you fully know all theſe, you ſhall fully know the deſert of ſin. Beſides, you know that the Offendor is too partial to judge the Law, or the proceedings of his Judge. We judge by feeling, which blinds our reaſon. We ſee in common worldly things that moſt men think the cauſe is right which is their own: and that all is wrong that's done againſt them: and let the moſt wiſe, or juſt, impartial

partial friends perſwade them to the contrary, and its all in vain. There's few children but think the Father is unmerciful, or dealeth hardly with them, if he whip them. There's ſcarce the vileſt ſwiniſh wretch, but thinketh the Church doth wrong him if they excommunicate him: nor ſcarce a Thief or Murderer that is hanged, but would accuſe the Law and Judge of cruelty, if that would ſerve turn.

7. Can you think that an *unholy* ſoul is *fit for heaven*? Alas, they cannot *love* God *here*, nor do him any ſervice which he can accept. They are *contrary* to God, they *loath* that which he moſt loveth; and love that which he abhorreth: They are uncapable of that imperfect Communion with him, which his Saints do here partake of. How then can they live in that perfect love of him,

and

and full delights, and Communion with him, which is the bleſſedneſs of heaven? You do not accuſe your ſelves of unmercifulneſs, if you make not your enemy your boſom Counſellor; or if you take not your ſwine to bed and board with you; no nor if you take away his life, though he never ſinned. And yet will you blame the abſolute Lord, the moſt wiſe and gracious Soveraign of the world, if he condemn the Unconverted to perpetual miſery?

Uſe.

I Beſeech you now, all that love your ſouls, that inſtead of quarrelling with God and with his Word, you will preſently ſtoop to it, and uſe it for your good. All you that are yet unconverted in this Aſſembly, take this as the undoubted

undoubted truth of God: You must ere long be *converted or condemned.* There is no other way, but *Turn or Die.* When God that cannot lye hath told you this: When you hear it from the Maker and Judge of the world, its time for him that hath ears to hear. By this time you may see what you have to trust to. You are but *dead and damned* men, except you will be converted. Should I tell you otherwise, I should deceive you with a lie. Should I hide this from you, I should undo you, and be guilty of your blood, as the verses before my Text assure me, *Ver.* 8. *When I say to the wicked, O wicked man thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.* You see then, though this be a rough unwelcome Doctrine, its such as we

we muſt preach, and you muſt hear. It is eaſier to hear of hell then feel it. If your neceſſities did not require it, we would not gall your tender ears with truths that ſeem ſo harſh and grievous. Hell would not be ſo full, if people were but willing to know their caſe, and to hear and think of it. The reaſon why ſo few eſcape it, is becauſe they ſtrive not to enter in at the ſtrait gate of Converſion, and to go the narrow way of holineſs while they have time: and they ſtrive not, becauſe they be not wakened to a lively feeling of the danger they are in: and they be not wakened, becauſe they are loth to hear or think of it; and that is partly through fooliſh tenderneſs, and carnal ſelf-love, and partly becauſe they do not well believe the word that threatneth it. If you will not throughly believe this truth, me thinks the

weight

weight of it ſhould force you to remember it; and it ſhould follow you, and give you no reſt till you are converted. If you had but once heard this word by the voice of an Angel, *Thou muſt be Converted or Condemned: Turn or Die:* would it not ſtick in your mind, and haunt you night and day, ſo that in your ſinning you would remember it, and at your labour you would remember it, as if the voice were ſtill in your ears, *Turn or Die!* O happy were your ſouls if it might thus work with you, and never be forgotten, or let you alone, till it have driven home your hearts to God. But if you will caſt it out by forgetfulneſs or unbelief, how can it work to your Converſion and Salvation? But take this with you to your ſorrow; though you may put this out of your minds, you cannot put it out of the Bible: but

there

there it will ſtand as a ſealed truth which you ſhall experimentally know for ever, that there is no other way but *Turn* or *Die*.

O what's the matter then that the hearts of ſinners be not pierced with ſuch a weighty truth! A man would think now, that every Unconverted ſoul that hears theſe words, ſhould be pricked to the heart, and think with themſelves, *This is my own caſe*, and never be quiet till they found themſelves Converted. Believe it Sirs, this drowſie careleſs temper will not laſt long. Converſion and Condemnation are both of them awakening things: and one of them will make you feel ere long. I can foretell it as truly as if I ſaw it with my eyes, that either Grace or Hell will ſhortly bring theſe matters to the quick, and make you ſay, *What have I done? What a fooliſh wicked courſe have I taken!*

The ſcornful and the ſtupid ſtate of ſinners will laſt but a little while. As ſoon as they either Turn or Die, the preſumptuous dream will be at an end, and then their wits and feeling will return.

BUT I foreſee there are two things that are like to harden the unconverted, and make me loſe all my labour, except they can be taken out of the way: and that is the miſunderſtanding of theſe two words, [*The Wicked*] and [*Turn.*] Some will think with themſelves, Its true, the *wicked* muſt Turn or Die: but what is that to *me?* I am not *wicked*, though I am a *ſinner*, as all men be. Others will think, *Its true that we muſt Turn from our evil waies: but I am Turned long ago: I hope this is not*

not now to do. And thus while *wicked* men think they are *not wicked*, but are already *Converted*, we lose all our labour in perswading them to Turn. I shall therefore before I go any further, tell you here who are meant by [*the wicked*] and who they be that must *turn* or *die*, and also what is meant by *Turning*; and who they be that are truly converted: And this I have purposely reserved for this place, preferring the Method that fits my end.

And here you must observe, that in the sense of the Text, a *wicked man*, and a *converted man* are contraries. No man is a wicked man that is converted: and no man is a converted man that is wicked; So that to be a wicked man, and to be an unconverted man, is all one. And therefore in opening one we shall open both.

Before I can tell you what either *Wickedneſs* or *Converſion* is, I muſt go to the bottom, and fetch up the matter from the beginning.

It pleaſed the great Creator of the world, to make three ſorts of living Creatures; *Angels* he made pure Spirits without fleſh; and therefore he made them only for Heaven, and not for to dwell on earth. *Brutes* were made fleſh without immortal ſouls; and therefore they were made only for Earth and not for Heaven. *Man* is of a middle nature between both, as partaking of both fleſh and Spirit; and therefore he was made both for Earth and Heaven. But as his fleſh is made to be but a ſervant to his Spirit, ſo is he made for earth but as his paſſage or way to Heaven, and not that this ſhould be his home or happineſs. The bleſſed ſtate that man was made

made for, was to behold the Glorious Majesty of the Lord, and to praise him among his holy Angels, and to love him, and be filled with his Love for ever. And as this was the End that man was made for, so God did give him means that were fitted to the attaining of it. These means were principally two. First the right Inclination and Disposition of the mind of man. Secondly the right ordering of his life and practice. For the first, God suited the Disposition of man unto his End; giving him such knowledge of God as was fit for his present state, and an Heart Disposed and Inclined to God, in holy Love. But yet he did not *fix* or *confirm* him on this condition; but having made him a free agent, he left him in the hands of his own free-will. For the second, God did that which belonged to him; that is, he gave man a perfect Law, re-

quiring him to continue in the Love of God, and perfectly to obey him. By the wilfull breach of this Law, man did not only forfeit his hopes of everlasting life, but also turned his heart from God, and fixed it on these lower fleshly things, and hereby did blot out the spiritual Image of God from his soul. So that man did both fall short of the Glory of God, which was his End, and put himself out of the Way by which he should have attained it: and this both as to the frame of his *heart* and of his *life*. The holy Inclination and Love of his soul to God, he lost: and instead of it, he contracted an Inclination and Love to the pleasing of his flesh, or carnal self by earthly things: growing strange to God, and acquainted with the creature: And the course of his life was suited to the Bent and Inclination of his heart:

heart: and he lived to his carnal ſelf, and not to God: he ſought the creature for the pleaſing of his fleſh, inſtead of ſeeking to pleaſe the Lord. With this *Nature or Corrupt inclination* we are all now born into the world: For *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Job* 14. 4. As a Lion hath a fierce and cruel *nature* before he doth devour: and as an Adder hath a venemous *nature* before he ſting: ſo in our very infancy we have thoſe ſinful *Natures* or *Inclinations* before we think, or ſpeak, or do amiſs. And hence ſpringeth all the ſin of our lives. And not only ſo, but when God hath of his mercy provided us a Remedy, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to be the Saviour of our ſouls, and bring us back to God again, we naturally love our preſent ſtate, and are loth to be brought out of it, and therefore

are ſet againſt the means of our Recovery; and though cuſtom have taught us to thank Chriſt for his good will, yet carnal-ſelf perſwadeth us to refuſe his Remedies, and to deſire to be excuſed when we are commanded to take the Medicines which he offereth, and are called to forſake all, and follow him to God and Glory.

I pray you read over this leaf again and mark it; for in theſe few words, you have a true Deſcription of our natural ſtate; and conſequently of a wicked man. For every man that is in this ſtate of corrupted nature, is a wicked man, and in a ſtate of death.

By this alſo you are prepared to underſtand what it is to be *Converted*; to which end you muſt further know, That the

the mercy of God, not willing that man ſhould periſh in his ſin, provided a Remedy, by cauſing his Son to take our Nature, and being in one perſon God and man, to become a Mediator between God and man, and by dying for our ſins on the Croſs, to ranſom us from the curſe of God, and the power of the Devil; and having thus Redeemed us, the Father hath delivered us into his hands as *his own*. Hereupon the Father and the Mediator do make a New Law and Covenant for man, not like the firſt, which gave life to none but the perfectly obedient, and condemned man for every ſin; but Chriſt hath made a Law of Grace, or a Promiſe of Pardon and Everlaſting life to all that by true Repentance and by Faith in Chriſt are Converted unto God. Like an Act of Oblivion which is made by a Prince to a

company of Rebels, on condition they will lay down arms and come in, and be loyal ſubjects for the time to come.

But becauſe the Lord knoweth that the heart of man is grown ſo wicked, that for all this men will not accept of the Remedy, if they be left to themſelves, therefore the Holy Ghoſt hath undertaken it as his office to inſpire the Apoſtles, and ſeal up the Scripture by Miracles and Wonders, and to illuminate and convert the ſouls of the Elect.

So that by this much you ſee that as there are three perſons in the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, ſo each of theſe perſons have their ſeveral works, which are eminently aſcribed to them.

The *Fathers* works were to Create us, to Rule us as his Rational

tional creatures, by the Law of Nature, and Judge us thereby: And in mercy to provide us a Redeemer when we were loſt, and to ſend his Son, and accept his Ranſom.

The works of the *Son* for us were theſe, To Ranſom and Redeem us by his Sufferings and Righteouſneſs; to give out the Promiſe or Law of Grace, and Rule and Judge the world as their Redeemer, on terms of Grace, and to make interceſſion for us, that the benefit of his death may be communicated: and to ſend the Holy Ghoſt (which the Father alſo doth by the Son.) The works of the Holy Ghoſt for us are theſe; to indite the Holy Scriptures, by inſpiring and guiding the Prophets and Apoſtles, and ſealing the word by his Miraculous gifts and works: and the illuminating and exciting the ordi-

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nary Miniſters of the Goſpel, and ſo enabling them, and helping them to publiſh that Word; and by the ſame Word Illuminating and Converting the ſouls of men. So that as you could not have been *reaſonable Creatures*, if the *Father* had not *Created* you; nor have had any *acceſs to God*, if the *Son* had not *Redeemed* you; ſo neither can you have a *part in Chriſt*, or be ſaved, except the *Holy Ghoſt* do *ſanctifie* you.

So that by this time you may ſee the ſeveral cauſes of this work. The *Father* ſendeth the *Son*: the *Son* Redeemeth us, and maketh the Promiſe of Grace; the *Holy Ghoſt* inditeth and ſealeth this Goſpel; the *Apoſtles* are the Secretaries of the Spirit to write it; the *Preachers* of the Goſpel do proclaim it, and perſwade men to obey it. And the *Holy Ghoſt* doth make their preaching effectual, by opening

opening the hearts of men to entertain it. And all this to repair the image of God upon the ſoul; and to ſet the heart upon God again, and take it off the creature and carnal ſelf, to which it is revolted, and ſo to turn the current of the life into an heavenly courſe, which before was earthly: and all this by the entertainment of Chriſt by Faith, who is the Phyſitian of the ſoul.

By this which I have ſaid, you may ſee what it is to be *Wicked*, and what it is to be *Converted*. Which I think will be yet plainer to you, if I deſcribe them as conſiſting of their ſeveral parts: and for the firſt, a *wicked man* may be known by theſe three things.

Firſt, he is one who placeth his *chief content on earth*, and loveth the creature more then God, and his fleſhly proſperity above the heavenly felicity: He ſavoureth the

the things of the flesh, but neither discerneth nor savoureth the things of the Spirit: though he will *say*, that Heaven is better then earth, yet doth he not really so esteem it to himself. If he might be sure of earth, he would let go heaven, and had rather stay here, then be removed thither. A life of perfect holiness, in the sight of God, and in his love and praises for ever in heaven, doth not find such liking with his heart, as a life of health, and wealth, and honour here upon earth. And though he falsly profess that he loveth God above all, yet indeed he never felt the power of Divine Love within him, but his mind is more set on the world, or fleshly pleasures, then on God. In a word, who ever Loveth earth above heaven, and fleshly prosperity more then God, is a wicked unconverted man.

On

On the other side, a *Converted man* is illuminated to discern the *Loveliness* of God: and so far believeth the Glory that is to be had with God, that his heart is taken up to it, and set more upon it, then on any thing in this world. He had rather see the face of God, and live in his everlasting love and praises, then have all the wealth or pleasure of this world. He seeth that all things else are vanity; and nothing but God can fill the soul; and therefore let the world go which way it will, he layeth up his treasure and hopes in heaven, and for that he is resolved to let go all. As the fire doth mount upward, and the Needle that is touched with the load-stone still turneth to the North: so the Converted soul is *enclined* unto God. Nothing else can satisfie him; nor can he find any Content

and

and Reſt but in his Love. In a word, All that are Converted, do Eſteem and Love God better then all the world, and the Heavenly felicity is dearer to them then their fleſhly proſperity. The proof of what I have ſaid you may find in theſe places of Scripture, *Phil.* 3. 18. 21. *Mat.* 6. 19, 20, 21. *Col.* 3. 1,2,3,4. *Rom* 8.5,6,7,8,9,18,23. *Pſal.* 73.25,26.

Secondly, a wicked man is one that maketh it the *principal buſineſs of his life to proſper in the world*, and attain his fleſhly ends. And though he may read, and hear, and do much in the outward duties of Religion, and forbear diſgracefull ſins, yet this is all but upon the by, and he never makes it the trade and principal buſineſs of his life to pleaſe God, and attain everlaſting glory, but puts off God with the leavings of the world, and gives him no more

ſervice

ſervice then the fleſh can ſpare: for he will not part with all for heaven.

On the contrary, a *Converted* man is one that makes it the *principal care and buſineſs of his life to Pleaſe God*, and to be ſaved, and takes all the bleſſings of this life but as accommodations in his journey towards another life; and uſeth the creature in ſubordination unto God: he *loveth* an holy life, and longeth to be *more* holy: he hath no ſin but what he hateth, and longeth, and prayeth, and ſtriveth to be rid of. The drift and bent of his life is for God: and if he ſin, it is contrary to the very bent of his heart and life, and therefore he riſeth again, and lamenteth it, and dare not wilfully live in any known ſin. There is nothing in this world ſo dear to him, but he can give it up to God, and forſake it for him and the hopes

hopes of glory. All this you may see in *Col.*3.1,2,3,4,5. *Mat.*6.33,20. *Luk.*28.22,23,29. *Luk.*14.18.24, 26,27. *Rom.*8.13. *Gal.*5.24. *Luk.* 12.21, *&c.*

Thirdly, the soul of a wicked man did never truly discern and relish the mysterie of Redemption, nor thankfully entertain an offered Saviour, nor is he taken up with the love of the Redeemer, nor willing to be ruled by him as the Physitian of his soul, that he may be saved from the guilt and power of his sins, and recovered unto God: but his heart is insensible of this unspeakable benefit, and is quite against the healing means by which he should be recovered. Though he may be willing to be *carnally* Religious, yet he never resigneth up his soul to Christ, and to the motions and conduct of his Word and Spirit.

On the contrary, the *Converted* soul

ſoul having felt himſelf undone by ſin, and perceiving that he hath loſt his peace with God, and hopes of heaven, and is in danger of everlaſting miſery, doth thankfully entertain the tidings of Redemption, and believing in the Lord Jeſus as his only Saviour, reſigneth up himſelf to him for wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption. He taketh Chriſt as the Life of his ſoul, and liveth by him, and uſeth him as his ſalve for every ſore, admiring the wiſdom and Love of God in this wonderful work of mans Redemption. In a word, Chriſt doth even dwell in his heart by faith, and the life that he now liveth is by the Faith of the Son of God, that hath loved him, and gave himſelf for him. Yea it is not ſo much he that liveth, as Chriſt in him. For theſe, ſee *John* 1. 11, 12. & 3. 19, 20. *Rom.* 8. 9. *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9, 10.

8, 9, 10. *Gal.* 2. 20. *Joh.* 15. 2, 3, 4. 1 *Cor.* 1. 20. & 2. 2.

YOU ſee now in plain terms from the word of God, who are the wicked, and who are the Converted. Ignorant people think that if a man be no ſwearer, nor curſer, nor rayler, nor drunkard, nor fornicator, nor extortioner, nor wrong any body in their dealings, and if they come to Church, and ſay their prayers, theſe cannot be wicked men. Or if a man that hath been guilty of drunkenneſs, or ſwearing, or gaming, or the like vices, do but forbear them for the time to come, they think that this is a Converted man. Others think, if a man that hath been an enemy and ſcorner at godlineſs, do but approve it, and joyn himſelf with thoſe that are godly, and be hated

hated for it by the wicked as the godly are, that this must needs be a Converted man. And some are so foolish as to think they are Converted, by taking up some new and false opinion, and falling into some dividing party, as Anabaptists, Quakers, Papists, or such like. And some think, if they have but been affrighted by the fears of Hell, and had Convictions and Gripes of Conscience, and thereupon have purposed and promised amendment, and taken up a life of Civil behaviour, and outward Religion, that this must needs be true Conversion. And these are the poor deluded souls that are like to lose the benefit of all our perswasions; and when they hear that the wicked must *Turn* or *Die*, they think that this is not spoken to them, for they are not *wicked*, but art *Turned* already. And therefore it is that Christ told

told some of the Rulers of the Jews, who were graver and civiler then the common people, that *Publicans and Harlots do go into the Kingdom of God before them, Mat.* 21.21. Not that an harlot or gross sinner can be saved without Conversion; but because it was easier to make these gross sinners perceive their sin and misery, and the necessity of a change, when the civiler sort do delude themselves, by thinking that they are Converted already, when they be not.

O Sirs, Conversion is another kind of work then most are ware of: Its not a small matter to bring an Earthly mind to Heaven, and to shew man the amiable excellencies of God, till he be taken up in such Love to him, that never can be quenched; to break the heart for sin, and make him flie for refuge unto Christ, and thankfully embrace

embrace him as the life of his ſoul, to have the very drift and bent of the heart and life to be changed, ſo that a man renounceth that which he took for his felicity, and placeth his felicity where he never did before, and liveth not to the ſame end, and driveth not on the ſame deſign in the world, as formerly he did: in a word, he that is in Chriſt, is a *new creature*; *old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. He hath a new underſtanding, a new will and reſolution, new ſorrows, and deſires, and love, and delight, new thoughts, new ſpeeches, new company (if poſſible) and a new converſation. Sin that before was a jeſting matter with him, is now ſo odious and terrible to him, that he flies from it as from death. The world that was ſo lovely in his eyes, doth now appear but as vanity and vexation: God

that

that was before neglected, is now the only Happineſs of his ſoul; before he was forgotten, and every luſt preferred before him; but now he is ſet next the heart, and all things muſt give place to him: and the heart is taken up in the attendance and obſervance of him: and is grieved when he hides his face, and never thinks it ſelf well without him. Chriſt himſelf that was wont to be ſlightly thought of, is now his only hope and refuge, and he liveth upon him as on his daily bread; he cannot pray without him, nor rejoyce without him, nor think, nor ſpeak, nor live without him. Heaven it ſelf that before was lookt upon but as a tolerable reſerve, which he hoped might ſerve turn as better then hell, when he could not ſtay any longer in the world, is now taken for his home, the place of his only Hope and Reſt, where he ſhall

ſee,

See, and Love, and Praiſe that God that hath his heart already. Hell that before did ſeem but as a bug-bear to frighten men from ſin, doth now appear to be a real miſery, that is not to be ventured on, nor jeſted with. The works of holineſs which before he was weary of, and ſeemed to be more ado then needs, are now both his recreation and his buſineſs, and the trade that he lives upon. The Bible which was before to him but almoſt as a common book, is now as the Law of God, as a Letter written to him from heaven, and ſubſcribed with the name of the *Eternal Majeſty*; it is the Rule of his thoughts, and words, and deeds; the commands are binding, the threats are dreadful, and the promiſes of it ſpeak life to his ſoul. The godly that ſeemed to him but like other men, are now the excellenteſt and happieſt on earth. And

the wicked that were his play-fellows are now his grief: and he that could laugh at their ſin, is readyer now to weep for their ſin and miſery, *Pſalm* 16. 3. & 15. 4. *Phil.* 3. 18. In ſhort, he hath a New End in his thoughts, and a New Way in his endeavours, and therefore his Heart and life is New. Before his *Carnal-ſelf* was his *End*; and his pleaſure, and worldly Profits, and Credit were his Way: and now God and everlaſting Glory is his *End*: and Chriſt, and the Spirit, and Word, and Ordinances, Holineſs to God, and Righteouſneſs and Mercy to men, theſe are his *Way*. Before *Self* was the chief Ruler, to which the matters of God and Conſcience muſt ſtoop and give place: and now God in Chriſt, by the Spirit, Word and Miniſtry is the chief Ruler, to whom both *Self*, and all the matters of *Self* muſt give place.

So

So that this is not a change in one or two, or twenty points, but in the whole ſoul: and the very end and Bent of the Converſation. A man may ſtep out of one path into another, and yet have his face the ſame way, and be ſtill going towards the ſame place; but tis another matter to turn quite back again, and take his journey the clean contrary way to a contrary place. So it is here. A man may turn from drunkenneſs to thriftineſs, and forſake his good fellowſhip, and other groſs diſgraceful ſins, and ſet upon ſome duties of Religion, and yet be going ſtill to the ſame end as before, intending his carnal *Self* above all, and giving it ſtill the Government of his ſoul. But when he is Converted, this *Self* is denyed and taken down, and God is ſet up, and his face is turned the contrary way: and he that before was addicted to

himſelf, and lived to himſelf, is now by Sanctification devoted to God, and liveth unto God: before he asked himſelf, what he ſhould do with his time, his parts, and his eſtate; and for himſelf he uſed them: but now he asketh God what he ſhall do with them, and he uſeth them for him. Before he would pleaſe God ſo far as might ſtand with the Pleaſure of his fleſh, and Carnal *Self*, but not to any great diſpleaſure of them. But now he will pleaſe God, let *Fleſh* and *Self* be never ſo much diſpleaſed. This is the great change that God will make upon all that ſhall be ſaved.

You can ſay, that the Holy-Ghoſt is your *Sanctifier*; but do you know what *Sanctification is?* Why this is it that I have now opened to you: and every man and woman in the world muſt haye this, or be condemned to everlaſting

lasting misery. They must *Turn or Die.*

Do you believe all this Sirs, or do you not? Surely you dare not say you do not: For tis past doubt or denyal: These are not Controversies, where one learned pious man is of one mind, and another of another: where one party saith this, and the other saith that: Papists, and Anabaptists, and every Sect among us that deserve to be called Christians, are all agreed in this that I have said; and if you will not believe the God of Truth, and that in a case where *every* Sect and party do believe him, you are utterly unexcusable.

But if you do believe this, how comes it to pass that you live so quietly in an unconverted state? Do you know that you are Converted? and can you find this wonderfull change upon your

ſouls? Have you been thus born again and made anew? Be not theſe ſtrange matters to many of you? and ſuch as you never felt upon your ſelves? if you cannot tell the day or the week of your change, or the very Sermon that Converted you, yet do you find that the work is done? and ſuch a change indeed there is? and that you have ſuch hearts as are before deſcribed? Alas, the moſt do follow their worldly buſineſs, and little trouble their minds with ſuch thoughts. And if they be but reſtrained from ſcandalous ſins, and can ſay, *I am no whore-monger, nor thief, nor curſer, nor ſwearer, nor tipler, nor extortioner, I go to Church and ſay my prayers,* they think that this is true Converſion, and they ſhall be ſaved as well as any. Alas this is fooliſh cheating of your ſelves. This is too much contempt of an endleſs glory: and

too

too groſs neglect of your immortal ſouls. Can you make ſo light of Heaven and Hell? Your corpſes will ſhortly all lye in the duſt, and Angels or Devils will preſently ſeize upon your ſouls; and every man and woman of you all, will ſhortly be among other company, and in another caſe then now you are; you will dwell in thoſe houſes but a little longer; you will work in your ſhops and fields but a little longer; you will ſit in thoſe ſeats, and dwell on this earth but a little longer; you will ſee with thoſe eyes, and hear with thoſe ears, and ſpeak with thoſe tongues but a little longer, till the Reſurrection day; and can you make ſhift to forget this? O what a place will you be ſhortly in of Joy or Torment! O what a ſight will you ſhortly ſee in Heaven or Hell! O what thoughts will ſhortly fill your hearts, with unſpeakable

Delight or Horrour? What work will you be employed in? to Praiſe the Lord with Saints and Angels, or to cry out in fire unquenchable with Devils? And ſhould all this be forgotten? And all this will be endleſs and ſealed up by an unchangeable decree: Eternity, Eternity, will be the meaſure of your Joyes or ſorrows, and can this be forgotten? And all this is true Sirs, moſt *certain true*: when you have gone up and down a little longer, and ſlept and awak't a few times more, you'l be dead and gone, and find all true that now I tell you: and yet can you now ſo much forget it! You ſhall then remember that you heard *this Sermon*, and that *this day*, from *this place*, you were remembred of theſe things: and perceive them matters a thouſand times greater then either you or I could here conceive: and yet

ſhall

ſhall they be now ſo much forgotten?

Beloved friends, if the Lord had not awakened me to believe and lay to heart theſe things my ſelf, I ſhould have remained in the *dark* and *ſelfiſh* ſtate, and have periſhed for ever: but if he have truly made me ſenſible of them, it will conſtrain me to compaſſionate you, as well as my ſelf: If your eyes were ſo far opened as to *ſee* Hell, and you ſaw your neighbours that were Unconverted dragg'd thither with hideous cries, though they were ſuch as you accounted honeſt people on earth, and feared no ſuch matter by themſelves, ſuch a ſight would make you go home and think of it, and think again; and make you warn all about you as the damned worldling in *Luke* 16. 28. would have had his Brethren warned, leſt they come to that place of tor-

ment. Why, faith is a kind of sight; it is the eye of the soul; the Evidence of things not seen: If I believe God, it is next to seeing: And therefore I beseech you excuse me, if I be half as earnest with you about these matters, as if I had seen them. If I must die to morrow, and it were in my power to come again from another world and tell you what I had seen, would you not be willing to hear me, and would you not believe, and regard what I should tell you? If I might preach one Sermon to you after I am dead, and have seen what is done in the world to come, would you not have me plainly speak the truth, and would you not crowd to hear me? and would you not lay it to heart? but this must not be; God hath his appointed way of teaching you by Scripture and Ministers; and he will not humour Un-

Unbelievers ſo far as to ſend men from the dead to them, and to alter his eſtabliſht way: if any man quarrel with the Sun, God will not humour him ſo far as to ſet him up a clearer light. Friends, I beſeech you regard me now, as you would do if I ſhould come from the dead to you: for I can give you as full aſſurance of the truth of what I ſay to you, as if I had been there and ſeen it with my eyes: For its poſſible for one from the dead to deceive you; but Jeſus Chriſt can never deceive you; the Word of God delivered in Scripture, and ſealed up by the Miracles and holy workings of the Spirit, can never deceive you. Believe this, or believe nothing. Believe and obey this, or you are undone. Now as ever you believe the Word of God, and as ever you care for the ſalvation of your ſouls, let me beg of you this reaſonable

ſonable requeſt, and I beſeech you deny me not: that you would without any more delay, when you are gone from hence, remember what you heard, and enter into an earneſt ſearch of your hearts, and ſay to your ſelves, *Is it ſo indeed? Muſt I Turn or Die? Muſt I be Converted or Condemned? Its time for me then to look about me, before it be too late. O why did I not look after this till now? Why did I venturouſly poſte off, or ſlubber over ſo great a buſineſs? Was I awake, or in my wits? Oh bleſſed God, what a mercy is it that thou didſt not cut off my life all this while, before I had any certain hope of eternal life? Well, God forbid that I ſhould neglect this work any longer. What ſtate is my ſoul in? Am I Converted, or am I not? Was ever ſuch a change or work done upon my ſoul? Have I been illuminated by the Word and Spirit of the Lord,*

Lord, to see the odiousness of sin, the need of a Saviour, the Love of Christ, and the excellencies of God and Glory? Is my heart broken or humbled within me for my former life? Have I thankfully entertained my Saviour and Lord, that offered himself with pardon and life to my soul? Do I hate my former sinful life, and the remnant of every sin that is in me? Do I flie from them as my deadly enemies? Do I give up my self to a life of Holiness and Obedience to God? Do I love it, and delight in it? Can I truly say that I am dead to the world and carnal Self, and that I live for God and the Glory which he hath promised? Hath Heaven more of my Estimation, and Resolution, then Earth? And is God the dearest and the Highest in my Soul? Once I am sure I lived principally to the world and flesh, and God had nothing but some heartless services which the world

world could spare, and which were the leavings of the flesh. Is my heart now turned another way? Have I a new design, and a new end, and a new train of holy affections? Have I set my hopes and heart in heaven? And is it now the scope, and design, and bent of my heart and life, to get well to heaven, and see the glorious face of God, and live in his everlasting Love and Praise? And when I sin, is it against the very habitual bent and design of my heart? And do I conquer all gross sins, and am I weary, and willing to be rid of mine infirmities? This is the state of a Converted soul. And thus must it be with me, or I must perish. Is it thus indeed with me, or is it not? Its time to get this doubt resolved, before the dreadful Judge resolve it. I am not such a stranger to my own heart and life, but I may somewhat perceive whether I am thus Converted or not: if I be not,

it will do me no good to flatter my soul with false conceits and hopes. I am resolved no more to deceive my self: but to endeavour to know truly off or on, whether I be Converted, yea or no; that If I be, I may rejoyce in it, and glorifie my gracious Lord, and comfortably go on till I reach the Crown: and if I am not, I may set my self to beg and seek after the Grace that should convert me, and may turn without any more delay: For if I find in time that I am out of the way, by the help of Christ, I may turn and be recovered; but if I stay till either my heart be forsaken of God in blindness and hardness, or till I be catcht away by death, its then too late. There is no place for Repentance and Conversion then; I know it must be now or never.]

Sirs, this is my request to you, that you will but take your hearts to task, and thus examine them, till

till you ſee, if it may be, whether you are Converted or not? and if you cannot find it out by your own endeavours, go to your Miniſters, if they be faithful and experienced men, and deſire their aſſiſtance. The matter is great; let not baſhfulneſs nor careleſneſs hinder you. They are ſet over you to adviſe you, for the ſaving of your ſouls, as Phyſitians adviſe you for the curing of your bodies. It undoes many thouſands, that they think they are in the way to ſalvation, when they are not: and think that they are Converted, when it is no ſuch thing. And then when we call to them daily to *Turn*, they go away as they came, and think that this concerns not them; for they are turned already, and hope they ſhall do well enough in the way that they are in, at leaſt if they do pick the faireſt path, and avoid ſome of the

the fouleſt ſteps; when alas, all this while they live but to the world, and fleſh, and are ſtrangers to God and eternal life, and are quite out of the way to Heaven. And all this is much, becauſe we cannot perſwade them to a few ſerious thoughts of their Condition, and to ſpend a few hours in the examining of their ſtates. Is there not many a ſelf-deceiving wretch that heareth me this day, that never beſtowed one hour or quarter of an hour in all their lives, to examine their ſouls, and try whether they are truly Converted or not? O merciful God, that will care for ſuch wretches that care no more for themſelves? and that will do ſo much to ſave them from Hell, and help them to Heaven, who will do ſo little for it themſelves! If all that are in the way to Hell, and in a ſtate of damnation, did but know it, they durſt not con-

continue in it. The greateſt hope that the Devil hath of bringing you to damnation without a reſcue, is by keeping you blindfold, and ignorant of your ſtate, and making you believe that you may do well enough in the way that you are in. If you knew that you are out of the way to heaven, and were loſt for ever if you ſhould die as you are, durſt you ſleep another night in the ſtate that you are in? durſt you live another day in it? Could you heartily laugh or be merry in ſuch a ſtate? What! And not know but you may be ſnatcht away to hell in an hour! Sure it would conſtrain you to forſake your former company and courſes, and to betake your ſelves to the waies of Holineſs, and the Communion of the Saints. Sure it would drive you to cry to God for a new heart, and to ſeek help

help of thoſe that are fit to counſel you. Theres none of you ſure that *cares not* for being damned. Well then, I beſeech you preſently make enquiry into your hearts, and give them no reſt till you find out your condition, that if it be good, you may rejoyce in it, and go on: and if it be bad, you may preſently look about you for recovery, as men that believe they muſt *Turn* or *Die*. What ſay you Sirs? Will you reſolve and promiſe to be at this much labour for your own ſouls? Will you fall upon this ſelf-examination when you come home? Is my requeſt unreaſonable? Your conſciences know it is not. Reſolve on it then before you ſtir: Knowing how much it concerneth your ſouls, I beſeech you for the ſake of that God that doth command you, at whoſe Bar you will ſhortly all appear, that you will not deny

ny me this reasonable request. For the sake of those souls that must *turn or die*, I beseech you deny me not; even but to make it your business to understand your own Conditions, and build upon sure ground, and know off or on whether you are Converted or no, and venture not your souls on negligent security.

But perhaps you'l say, What if we should find our selves yet unconverted; what shall we do then? This question leadeth me to my second doctrine, which will do much to the answering of it, to which I shall now proceed.

Doct. 2. *IT is the promise of God, that the wicked shall Live if they will but Turn; Unfeignedly and throughly turn.*

The Lord here professeth that this

this is it that he takes pleasure in, that the wicked *Turn and Live.* Heaven is made as sure to the Converted, as Hell is to the Unconverted. *Turn and Live*, is as certain a truth, as *Turn or Die.* God was not *bound* to provide us a Saviour, nor open to us a door of hope, nor call us to Repent and Turn, when once we had cast our selves away by sin. But he hath freely done it to magnifie his Mercy: Sinners, there's none of you shall have cause to go home, and say I preach desperation to you. Do *we* use to shut up the door of Mercy against you? O that you would not shut it up against your selves! Do we use to tell you, that God will have no mercy on you, though you Turn and be Sanctified? When did you ever hear a Preacher say such a word? You that bark at the Preachers of the Gospel, for desiring to keep you out

out of Hell, and ſay that they Preach Deſperation; tell me if you can, when did you ever hear any ſober man ſay, that there is no hope for you, though you Repent and be Converted? No; it is the clean contrary that we daily proclaim from the Lord; and whoever is born again, and by Faith and Repentance doth become a new creature, ſhall certainly be ſaved: and ſo far are we from perſwading you to deſpair of this, that we perſwade you not to make any doubt of it. It is Life and not Death, that is the firſt part of our Meſſage to you: our Commiſſion is to offer ſalvation, certain ſalvation: a ſpeedy, glorious, everlaſting ſalvation, to every one of you: to the pooreſt beggar as well as the greateſt Lords: to the worſt of you; even to drunkards, ſwearers, worldlings, thieves, yea to the deſpiſers and reproachers of the

the holy way of ſalvation. We are commanded by the Lord our Maſter, to offer you a pardon for all thats paſt, if you will but now at laſt Return and Live; we are commanded to beſeech and intreate you to accept the offer and Return; to tell you what preparation is made by Chriſt; what Mercy ſtayes for you; what Patience waiteth on you; what Thoughts of kindneſs God hath towards you; and how happy, how certainly and unſpeakably happy you may be if you will. We have indeed alſo a Meſſage of wrath and death, yea of a twofold wrath and death; but neither of them is our principal Meſſage; we muſt tell you of the wrath that is on you already, and the death that you are born under, for the breach of the Law of works; but this is but to ſhew you the need of Mercy, and provoke

voke you to esteem the grace of the Redeemer. And we tell you nothing but the truth which you must know: for who will seek out for Physick that knows not that he is sick? our telling you of your misery is not it that makes you miserable, but driveth you out to seek for mercy. It is you that have brought this death upon your selves. We tell you also of another death, even remedilesse, and much greater torment, that will fall on those that will not be Converted. But as this is true, and must be told you, so it is but the last and saddest part of our Message. We are first to offer you Mercy if you will Turn: and it is only those that will not Turn, not hear the voice of Mercy, that we must fore-tell damnation to. Will you but cast away your transgressions, delay no longer, but come away at the Call of Christ and be

Converted,

the Hopes of glory, but set more by your earthly prosperity and delights, then by the Joyes of Heaven; all you that are Religious but a little on the by, and give God no more then your flesh can spare; that have not denyed your carnal selves, and forsaken all that you have for Christ, in the estimation and grounded resolution of your souls, but have any one thing in the world so dear to you, that you cannot spare it for Christ, if he require it, but will rather venture on his displeasure then forsake it, *Turn ye, Turn ye; Why will you die?*

If you never heard it, or observed it before, Remember that you were told from the Word of God this day, that if you will but Turn, you may Live; and if you will not Turn, you shall surely die.

What now will you do Sirs?

What is your resolution? Will you Turn, or will you not? Halt not any longer between two opinions: if the Lord be God, follow him; if your flesh be God, then serve it still. If Heaven be better then earth and fleshly pleasures, come away then, and seek a better Country, and lay up your treasure where rust and mothes do not corrupt, and thieves cannot break through and steal, and be awakened at last with all your might, to seek the Kingdom that cannot be moved, *Heb.* 12. 28. and to employ your lives on an higher design, and turn the stream of your cares and labours another way then formerly you have done. But if earth be better then heaven, or will do more for you, or last you longer, then keep it, and make your best of it, and follow it still. Sirs, are you resolved what to do? if you be not, I will set a

few

few more moving Conſiderations before you, to ſee if reaſon will make you reſolve.

Conſider firſt, *What preparations Mercy hath made for your ſalvation*: and what pitty it is that any man ſhould be damned after all this. The time was when the flaming ſword was in the way, and the curſe of Gods Law would have kept thee back, if thou hadſt been never ſo willing to turn to God; The time was when thy ſelf and all the friends that thou haſt in the world, could never have procured thee the pardon of thy ſins paſt, though thou hadſt never ſo much lamented and reformed them. But Chriſt hath removed this impediment by the ranſom of his blood. The time was that God was wholly unreconciled, as being not ſatisfied for the violation of his Law: But now he is ſo far ſatisfied and recon-

ciled, as that he hath made thee a free Act of Oblivion, and a free deed of Gift of Christ and Life, and offereth it to thee, and Intreateth thee to accept it, and it may be thine if thou wilt. For, *he was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and hath committed to us the word of actual reconciliation*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 18, 19. Sinners, we are commanded to do this Message to you all, as from the Lord, [*Come, for all things are ready*] *Luke* 14. 17. Are *all things ready*, and are *you unready*? *God* is Ready to entertain you, and pardon all that you have done against him, if you will but come. As *long* as you have sinned, as *wilfully* as you have sinned, as *hainously* as you have sinned, he is ready to cast all behind his back, if you will but come. Though you have been prodigals, and run away from God, and have staid so long, he

he is ready even to meet you, and embrace you in his arms; and rejoyce in your converſion, if you will but turn. Even the earthly worldling, the ſwiniſh drunkard, may find God ready to bid them welcome, if they will but come. Doth not this turn thy heart within thee? O ſinner, if thou have an heart of fleſh, and not of ſtone in thee, methinks this ſhould melt it. Shall the dreadful infinite Majeſty of heaven even wait for thy returning, and be ready to receive thee, who haſt abuſed him, and forgotten him ſo long? Shall he delight in thy Converſion, that might at any time glorifie his Juſtice in thy damnation; and yet doth it not melt thy heart within thee, and art thou not yet ready to come in? Haſt thou not as much reaſon to be ready to come, as God hath to invite thee, and bid thee welcome?

But that's not all: *Christ* hath done his part on the *Cross*, and made such way for thee to the Father, that on *his* account thou maist be welcome if thou wilt come. And yet art thou not Ready?

A *Pardon* is Ready, expressly granted and offered thee in the Gospel. And yet art thou unready?

The *Ministers* of the Gospel are Ready to assist thee, to instruct thee, and pronounce the absolving words of peace to thy soul; they are Ready to pray for thee, and to seal up thy pardon by the administration of the holy Sacrament; and yet art thou not ready?

All that fear God about thee are Ready to rejoyce in thy Conversion, and to receive thee into the Communion of Saints, and to give thee the right hand of fellowship, yea though thou hadst been one that

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

that had been caſt out of their ſociety: they dare not but forgive where God forgiveth, when it is manifeſt to them by thy confeſſion and amendment: they dare not ſo much as hit thee in the teeth with thy former ſins, becauſe they know that God will not upbraid thee with them. If thou hadſt been never ſo ſcandalous, if thou wouldſt but heartily be Converted and come in, they would not refuſe thee, let the world ſay what they would againſt it. And are *all theſe ready* to receive thee, and yet art *thou not ready to come in?*

Yea, *Heaven* it ſelf is Ready: the Lord will receive thee into the glory of his Saints: as vile a beaſt as thou haſt been, if thou wilt but be cleanſed, thou maiſt have a place before his throne: his *Angels* will be ready to guard thy ſoul to the place of Joy, if thou do but unfeignedly come in.

And is *God ready*, *the Sacrifice of Christ Ready*, the *Promise Ready*, and *Pardon Ready?* are *Ministers Ready*, and the *People of God Ready*, and *Heaven* it self *Ready*, and *Angels Ready*, and all these but waiting for thy Conversion; and yet art *thou* not Ready? What not Ready to *live*, when thou hast been *dead* so long? not Ready to come to thy *right understanding*, (as the Prodigal is said to *come to himself*, Luke 15. 17.) when thou hast been *besides thy self so long?* Not ready to be *saved*, when thou art even ready to be *condemned?* Art thou not ready to lay *hold on Christ* that would deliver thee, when thou art even ready to *drown and sink* into damnation? Art thou not ready to be saved from Hell, when thou art even ready to be cast remedilesly into it? Alas man, dost thou know what thou dost! if thou die unconverted,

ed, there is no doubt to be made of thy damnation: and thou art not sure to live an hour; And *yet* art thou not ready to turn and to come in? O miserable wretch! hast thou not served the flesh and the Devil long enough? Yet hast thou not had enough of sin? Is it so good to thee? or so profitable for thee? Dost thou know what it is, that thou wouldst yet have *more* of it? Hast thou had so many *calls* and so many *mercies*, and so many *blows*, and so many *examples*? hast thou seen so many laid in the grave, and yet art thou not ready to let go thy sins and come to Christ? What! after so many convictions, and gripes of Conscience: after so many purposes and promises, art thou not yet ready to turn and live? Oh that thy eyes, thy heart were opened to know how fair an offer is now made to thee! and what a joyful mes-

ſage it is that we are ſent on, to bid thee come: for all things are ready.

2. Conſider alſo what *Calls* thou haſt to *Turn* and *Live*. How *many*, how *loud*, how *earneſt*, how *dreadful*, and yet what encourageing joyfull Calls?

For the principal Inviter, it is God himſelf. He that commandeth Heaven and Earth, commandeth thee to Turn; and preſently without delay to Turn; he commands the Sun to run its courſe, and to riſe upon thee every morning: and though it be ſo glorious a creature, and many times bigger then all the earth, yet it obeyeth him, and faileth not one minute of its appointed time. He comandeth all the planets and the orbs of Heaven, and they obey: He commandeth the Sea to ebb and flow, and the whole Creation to keep its courſe, and all obey him. The Angels of heaven obey his will, when he ſends

ſends them to Miniſter to ſuch ſilly worms as we on earth, *Hebrews* 1. 14. And yet if he command but a ſinner to *Turn*, *He* will not obey him; *He* only thinks himſelf wiſer then God, and *He* cavils and pleads the cauſe of ſin, and will not away. If the Lord Almighty ſay the word, the Heavens and all therein obey him: but if he call but a drunkard out of an Ale-houſe, he will not obey; or if he call a worldly fleſhly ſinner to deny himſelf, and mortifie the fleſh, and ſet his heart on a better inheritance, he will not obey.

If thou hadſt any love in thee, thou wouldeſt know the voice, and ſay, *Oh this is my Fathers Call! how can I find in my heart to diſobey?* For the *ſheep* of Chriſt *do know and hear his voice, and they follow him, and he giveth them eternal life*, *John* 10. 4. If thou hadſt any ſpiritual life and ſenſe in thee, at leaſt

leaſt thou wouldſt ſay, *This Call is the dreadful voice of God, and who dare diſobey?* For ſaith the Prophet, *Amos* 3. 8. *The Lyon hath roared, who will not fear?* God is not as man that thou ſhouldſt dally and play with him: Remember what he ſaid to *Paul* at his Converſion [*It is hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks*] *Act.* 9. 5. Wilt thou yet go on and deſpiſe his word, and reſiſt his Spirit, and ſtop thine ear, againſt his Call? Who is it that will have the worſt of this? Doſt thou know whom thou diſobeyeſt and contendeſt with, and what thou art doing? It were a far wiſer and eaſier task for thee to contend with the Thorns, and ſpurn them with thy bare feet, and beat them with thy bare hand, or put thy head into the burning fire. *Be not deceived, God will not be mocked, Galat.* 6. 7. Whoever elſe be mocked, God will not: you were better

better play with the fire in your thatch, then with the fire of his burning wrath. *For our God is a consuming fire, Hebrews* 12.29. O how unmeet a match art thou for God! *It is a fearful thing to fall into his hands, Hebrews* 10. 31. and therefore it is a fearful thing to contend with him or resist him. As you love your souls, take heed what you do. What will you say, if he begin in wrath to plead with you? What will you do if he take you once in hand? Will you then strive against his Judgement, as now you do against his grace? saith the Lord, *Isa.*27.4,5. *Fury is not in me*: (that is, I delight not to destroy you: I do it as it were unwillingly: but yet) *who would set the bryars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them: I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me, and he*

shall

shall make peace with me] Its an unequal combat for the bryars and ſtubble to make war with the fire.

As thus you ſee, *Who it is that calleth you*, that ſhould move you to hear his Call and Turn; ſo conſider alſo, *by what inſtruments, and how often, & how earneſtly he doth it.*

1. Every *leaf* of the *bleſſed book* of God hath as it were a voice, and calls out unto thee, *Turn and live, Turn or thou wilt die.* How canſt thou open it, and read a leaf, or hear a Chapter, and not perceive God bids thee *Turn*?

2. It is the voice of every *Sermon* that thou heareſt: For what elſe is the ſcope and drift of all, but to call and perſwade, and intreat thee for to *Turn*?

3. It is the voice of many a *motion* of the *Spirit*, that ſecretly ſpeaks over theſe words again, and urgeth thee to *Turn*.

4. It

4. It is likely sometime it is the voice of thy own *Conscience*. Art thou not sometimes convinced that all is not well with thee? and doth not conscience tell thee that thou *must* be a new man, and take a new course, and often call upon thee to *Return*?

5. It is the voice of the gracious *examples* of the *Godly*. When thou seest them live an heavenly life, and fly from the sin which is thy delight, this really Calls on thee to *Turn*.

6. It is the voice of all the *Works* of God. For they also are Gods books, that teach thee this lesson, by shewing thee his Greatness, and Wisdom, and Goodness, and Calling thee to observe them, and admire the Creator, *Psal.* 19. 1, 2. *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work; Day unto Day uttereth Speech, night unto night sheweth Knowledge,*

Knowledge. Every time the Sun riseth upon thee, it really calleth thee to *Turn*: as if it should say, [*What do I travel and compass the world for, but to declare to men the glory of their Maker, and to light them to do his work? And do I still find thee doing the work of sin, and sleeping out thy life in negligence? Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*, Ephes. 5. 14. *The night is spent, the day is at hand: it is* now *high time to awake out of sleep: Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof*, Rom. 13. 11, 12, 13, 14. (This Text was the means of *Austins* Conversion.)

7. It

7. It is the voice of every *Mercy* thou doſt poſſeſs. If thou couldſt but hear and underſtand them, they all cry out unto thee, *Turn*. Why doth the earth bear thee but to ſeek and ſerve the Lord? why doth it afford thee its fruits but to ſerve him? Why doth the air afford thee breath, but to ſerve him? Why do all the creatures ſerve thee with their labours and their lives, but that thou mighteſt ſerve the Lord of them and thee? Why doth he give thee time, and health, and ſtrength, but for to ſerve him? Why haſt thou meat, and drink, and cloaths, but for his ſervice? Haſt thou any thing which thou haſt not received? And if thou didſt receive them, its reaſon thou ſhouldſt bethink thee, *from* whom, and *to what end* and uſe thou didſt receive them. Didſt thou never cry to him for help in thy diſtreſs? and didſt

thou

thou not then understand that it was thy part to Turn and serve him if he would deliver thee? He hath done his part, and spared thee yet longer, and tryed thee another and another year; and yet dost thou not Turn? You know the Parable of the unfruitful fig-tree, *Luke* 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. When the Lord had said, *Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?* he was intreated to try it one year longer, and then if it proved not fruitful, to cut it down. Christ himself there makes the application twice over, *verſ.* 3. & 5. [*Except ye Repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.*] How many years hath God looked for the fruits of Love and Holiness from thee, and hath found none? and *yet* he hath spared thee. How many a time by thy wilful ignorance and carelesness, and disobedience, hast thou provoked Justice to say, *Cut him down,*

down, why cumbereth he the ground? And yet Mercy hath prevailed, and Patience hath forborn the killing damning blow, to this day. If thou hadst the understanding of a man within thee, thou wouldst know that all this calleth thee to *Turn.* Dost thou *think thou shalt still escape the Judgement of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous Judgement of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds, Rom. 2. 3, 4, 5, 6.*

8. Moreover, it is the voice of every *affliction* to call thee to *make haste and Turn.* Sickness and pain cry *Turn*; and poverty, and loss of

of friends, and every twig of the chastising rod, cry *Turn*; and *yet* wilt thou not hearken to the Call? These have come near thee, and made thee *feel*, they have made thee *groan*, and can they not make thee *Turn*?

9. The very frame of thy *Nature* and *Being* it self bespeaketh thy *Return*. Why hast thou *Reason*, but to Rule thy flesh, and serve thy Lord? Why hast thou an understanding Soul, but to learn and know his will, and do it? Why hast thou an heart within thee that can love, and fear, and desire, but that thou shouldst fear him, and love him, and desire after him?

10. Yea thine own *engagements* by promise to the Lord do call upon thee to Turn and serve him. Thou hast bound thy self to him by a Baptismal Covenant, and renounced the world, the flesh, and the

the Devil: this thou hast confirmed by the profession of Christianity, and renewed it at Sacraments and in times of affliction: And wilt thou promise and vow, and never perform, and Turn to God?

Lay all these together now, and see what should be the issue. The holy *Scriptures* call upon thee to *Turn*: the *Ministers* of Christ do call upon thee to *Turn*: The *Spirit* cries Turn; thy *Conscience* cries Turn: the *godly* by perswasions and examples cry Turn: the *whole world* and all the creatures therein that are presented to thy consideration cry Turn: The patient *forbearance* of God cries Turn: All the *Mercies* which thou receivest cry Turn; the rod of Gods *chastisements* cries Turn: Thy *reason* and the frame of thy nature bespeaks the Turning: and so do all thy *Promises* to God;

God. And yet art thou not resolved to Turn?

3. Moreover, poor hard-hearted sinner! Didst thou ever consider, *upon what terms thou standest all this while with him that calleth on thee for to Turn?* Thou art his *own*, and *owest* him thy self and all thou hast; and may he not *Command* his *own*? Thou art his absolute servant, and shouldst serve no other Master. Thou standest at his *Mercy*, and thy life is in his hand: and he is resolved to save thee upon no other terms: thou hast many malicious spiritual enemies, that would be glad if God would but forsake thee, and let them alone with thee, and leave thee to their will: how quickly would they deal with thee in another manner? And thou canst not be delivered from them but by Turning unto God. Thou art fallen under his wrath by thy sin already:

already : and thou knoweſt not how long his patience will yet wait. Perhaps this is the laſt year ; perhaps the laſt day ; his ſword is even at thy heart, while the word is in thine ear : and if thou Turn not, thou art a dead and undone man. Were thy eyes but open to ſee where thou ſtandeſt, even upon the brink of hell, and to ſee how many thouſands are *there* already that did not turn, thou wouldſt ſee that its time to look about thee.

Well Sirs, look inwards now and tell me, How are your hearts affected with theſe offers of the Lord ? You hear what is his mind ; he *delighteth* not in your *death* : he calls to you, *Turn, turn* : its a fearful ſign, if all this move thee not, or do but half move thee ; and much more if it make thee more careleſs in thy miſery, becauſe thou heareſt of the mercifulneſs of God. The working of the medicine

medicine will partly tell us whether there be any hope of the Cure. O what glad tidings would it be to those that are now in Hell, if they had but such a Message from God! What a joyful word would it be to hear this [*Turn and Live:*] Yea what a welcome word would it be to thy self when thou hast felt that wrath of God but an hour! Or if after a thousand, or ten thousand years torment, thou couldst but hear such a word from God, [*Turn and Live*] and yet wilt thou now neglect it, and suffer us to return without our errand!

Behold sinners, we are set here as the messengers of the Lord, to set before you Life and Death: What say you? which of them will you choose? Christ standeth as it were by thee, with Heaven in one hand, and Hell in the other, and offereth thee thy choice: which

which wilt thou chooſe? *The voice of the Lord maketh the Rocks to tremble*, *Pſalm* 26. and is it nothing to hear him threaten thee, if thou wilt not Turn? Doſt thou not underſtand and feel this voice, [*Turn ye, Turn ye, Why will ye die?*] Why, it is the voice of *Love*, *of infinite Love*, of thy beſt and kindeſt friend, as thou mighteſt eaſily perceive by the motion: and yet canſt thou neglect it? It is the voice of pitty and compaſſion. The Lord ſeeth whither thou art going better then thou doſt, which makes him call after thee, *Turn, Turn*: He ſeeth what will become of thee, if thou turn not: He thinketh with himſelf, *Ah this poor ſinner will caſt himſelf into endleſs torments, if he do not Turn: I muſt in Juſtice deal with him according to my righteous Law*; and therefore he calleth after thee, *Turn, Turn* O ſinner!

if you did but know the thousandth part as well as God doth, the danger that is near you, and the misery that you are running into, we should have no more need to call after you to Turn.

Moreover, this voice that calleth to thee, is the same that hath prevailed with thousands already, and called all to heaven that are now there: And they would not now for a thousand worlds that they had made light of it, and not Turned to God. *Now* what are they possessing that Turned at Gods Call? *Now* they perceive that it was indeed the voice of Love that meant them no more harm then their salvation. And if thou wilt obey the same Call, thou shalt come to the same Happiness. There be millions that must for ever lament that they Turned not, but there's never a soul in Heaven that is sorry that they were Converted.

Well

Well Sirs, are you yet resolved, or are you not? Do I need to say any more to you? What will you do? Will you turn or not? Speak man in thy heart to God, though thou speak not out to me: Speak, lest he take thy silence for a denyal. Speak *quickly*, lest he never make thee the like offer more. Speak *resolvedly*, and not waveringly; for he will have no *Indifferents* to be his Followers. Say in thy heart now, without any more delay, even before thou stir hence, *By the Grace of God, I am resolved presently to turn. And because I know my own insufficiency, I am resolved to wait on God for his Grace, and to follow him in his ways, and forsake my former courses and companions, and give up my self to the guidance of the Lord.*

Sirs, You are not shut up in the darkness of Heathenism, nor in the desperation of the damned:

Life is before you: and you may have it on reasonable terms if you will: yea on free-cost, if you will accept it. The way of God lyeth plain before you; the Church is open to you: the company of the godly is open to you; you may have Christ, and pardon, and Holiness, if you will. What say you? Will you, or will you not? If you say nay, or say nothing, and still go on, God is witness, and this Congregation is witness, and you own Consciences are witness, how fair an offer you had this day. Remember, you might have had Christ, and would not. Remember, when you have lost it, that you might have had eternal Life as well as others, and would not: and all because you would not Turn.

But let us come to the next Doctrine, and hear your Reasons.

Doct

Doct. 6. *THE Lord condescendeth to reason the case with Unconverted sinners, and to ask them why they will die?*

A strange Disputation it is, both as to the Controversie, and as to the Disputants. 1. The Controversie or Question propounded to dispute of, is, *Why wicked men will damn themselves?* Or, *Why they will rather die then Turn?* Whether they have any sufficient reason for so doing?

2. The Disputants are *God* and *man*: the most *Holy God*, and *wicked unconverted sinners.*

1. Is it not a strange Thing which God doth seem here to suppose, that any man should be *willing to die*, and be damned? Yea that this should be the case of all

the wicked; that is, of the greatest part of the world! but you will say, *This cannot be: for nature desireth the preservation and felicity of it self; and the wicked are more selfish than others, and not less, and therefore how can any man be willing to be damned?*

To which I answer, 1. It is a certain Truth, that no man can be willing of any evil as evil, but only as it hath some appearance of good; much less can any man be willing to be eternally tormented. Misery as such is desired by none. 2. But yet for all that, it is most true which God here teacheth us, that the cause why the wicked die and are damned, is because *they will die and be damned.* And this is true in several respects.

1. Because they will go the way that leads to Hell; though they are told by God and man, whether it goes, and where it ends: and

though

though God hath so often profes-sed in his word, that if they hold on in that way, they shall be condemned: and that they shall not be saved unless they Turn. *Isa.* 48.22. & 57.21. *There is no peace,* saith the Lord, *unto the wicked.*] Isa. 59.8. *The way of Peace they know not; there is no Judgement in their going; They have made them crooked paths: Whosoever goeth therein, shall not know peace.*] They have the word and the Oath of the living God for it, that if they will not Turn, they shall not enter into his Rest. And yet wicked they are, and wicked they will be, let God and man say what they will; Fleshly they are, and fleshly they will be: Worldlings they are, and Worldlings they will be: though God hath told them that *the Love of the world is enmity to God*, and that *if any man love the world*, (in that measure)

the Love of the Father is not in him, James 4.4. 1 John 2. 15: so that *consequentially* these men are willing to be damned, though not directly: they are willing of the way to Hell, and Love the certain cause of their torment, though they be not willing of Hell it self, and do not love the pain which they must endure.

Is not this the Truth of your case Sirs? You would not burn in Hell: But you will kindle the fire by your sin, and cast your selves into it: you would not be tormented with Devils for ever; but you will do that which will certainly procure it, in despite of all that can be said against it. It is just as if you would say, *I will drink this rats-bane, or other poyson, but yet I will not die. I will cast my self headlong from the top of a Steeple, but yet I will not kill my self; I will thrust this knife into my*

my heart, but yet I will not take away my life. I will put this fire into the thatch of my house, but yet I will not burn it. Just so it is with wicked men; they will be wicked; and they will live after the flesh and the world, and yet they would not be damned. But do you not know that the means do lead unto the end? and that God hath by his righteous Law concluded that you must repent or perish? He that will take poyson, may as well say plainly, *I will kill my self*: for it will prove no better in the end. Though perhaps he loved it for the sweetness of the Sugar that was mixt with it, and would not be perswaded that it was poyson, but that he might take it and do well enough: But it is not his conceit and confidence that will save his Life. So if you will be Drunkards, or Fornicators, or Worldlings, or live after

the flesh, you may as well say plainly, *we will be damned*: For so you shall be unless you Turn; would you not rebuke the folly of a thief or murderer, that would say, [*I will steal and kill, but I will not be hanged.*] when he knows that if he do the one, the judge in Justice will see that the other be done? If he say, *I will steal, and murder*, he may as well say plainly, *I will be hanged.* So if you will go on in a carnal life, you may as well say plainly, *we will go to Hell.*

2. Moreover, *The wicked will not use those means, without which there is no hope of their Salvation*; He that will not eat, may as well say plainly he will not live, unless he can tell how to live without meat; He that will not go his journey, may as well say plainly he will not come to the end. He that falls into the water and will not come out, nor suffer another

to

to help him out, may as well say plainly he will be drowned: So if you be carnal and ungodly, and will not be Converted, nor use the *means* by which you should be converted, but think it more ado then needs, you may as well say plainly, you will be damned. For if you have found out a way to be saved without Conversion, you have done that which never was done before.

3. Yea this is not all, but the *wicked are unwilling, even of salvation it self.* Though they may desire somewhat which they call by the name of *Heaven*, yet Heaven it self, considered in the true nature of the felicity, they desire not: Yea their hearts are quite against it. Heaven is a state of perfect holiness, and of continual Love, and Praise to God, and the wicked have no heart to this. The imperfect Love, and Praise, and

and holineſs which is here to be attained, they have no mind of: Much leſs of that which is ſo much greater. The joyes of Heaven are of ſo pure and ſpiritual a nature, that the heart of the wicked cannot truly deſire them.

So that by this time you may ſee on what ground it is that God ſuppoſeth that the wicked are willing of their own deſtruction: They will not turn, though they muſt Turn or Die, they will rather venture on certain miſery, then be converted; and then to quiet themſelves in their ſin, they will make themſelves believe that they ſhall nevertheleſs eſcape.

2. And as this *Controverſie* is matter of wonder (that ever men ſhould be ſuch enemies to themſelves, as wilfully to caſt away their ſouls,) ſo are the *Diſputants* too. That God ſhould ſtoop ſo low, as thus to plead the caſe with man;

and

and that man ſhould be ſo ſtrangely blind and obſtinate, as to need all this in ſo plain a caſe, yea and to reſiſt all this, when their own ſalvation lieth upon the iſſue.

No wonder if they will not hear *us* that are men, when they will not hear the Lord himſelf; As God ſaith, *Ezekiel* 3. 7. when he ſent the Prophet to the Iſraelites, [*The houſe of Iſrael will not hearken unto thee: For they will not hearken unto me; For all the houſe of* Iſrael *are impudent and hard-hearted.*] No wonder if they can plead againſt a Miniſter, or a godly Neighbour, when they will plead againſt the Lord himſelf, even againſt the plaineſt paſſages of his word, and think that they have Reaſon on their ſide. When they *weary the Lord with their words*, they ſay, *Wherein have we wearied him?* *Mal.* 2. 17. The Prieſts that *deſpiſed his name*, durſt ask,

Wherein

Wherein have we despised thy name? And when they *polluted his Altar, and made the Table of the Lord contemptible*, they durst say, *Wherein have we polluted thee?* Mal. 1. 6, 7. But, [*Wo unto him* (saith the Lord) *that striveth with his Maker! Let the Potsheards strive with the Potsheards of the earth; Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?*] Isa. 45. 9.

Quest. *But why is it that God will Reason the Cause with man?*

Answ. 1. Because that man being a reasonable creature, is accordingly to be dealt with, and by Reason to be perswaded and overcome. God hath therefore enduced them with Reason, that they might use it for him. One would think a reasonable creature should not go against the cleerest and greatest Reason in the world, when it is set before him.

2. At

2. At leaſt men ſhall ſee that God did require nothing of them that was unreaſonable, but that whatever he commandeth them, and whatever he forbiddeth them, he hath all the right Reaſon in the world on his ſide, and they have good Reaſon to obey him, but none to diſobey. And thus even the damned ſhall be forced to juſtifie God, and confeſs that it was but Reaſon that they ſhould have turned to him, and they ſhall be forced to condemn themſelves, and confeſs that they had little reaſon to caſt away themſelves by the neglecting of his Grace in the day of their Viſitation.

Uſe

Use.

LOOK up your beſt and ſtrongeſt Reaſons, ſinners, if you will make good your way: You ſee now with whom you have to deal. What ſaiſt thou, Unconverted ſenſual wretch? Dareſt thou venture upon a diſpute with God? Art thou able to confute him? Art thou ready to enter the liſts? God asketh thee, why wilt thou die? Art thou furniſhed with a ſufficient anſwer? Wilt thou undertake to prove that God is miſtaken, and that thou art in the right? O what an undertaking is that! Why, either he or you is miſtaken, when he is for your Converſion, and you are againſt it; He calls upon you to turn, and you will not; He bids you do it preſently, even to day while it is called

led to day, and you delay, and think it time enough hereafter. He saith it must be a total change, and you must be holy, and new creatures, and born again; and you think that less may serve the turn, and that its enough to patch up the old man, without becoming New. Who is in the right now? God or you? God calleth on you to Turn and to Live an holy Life, and you will not; by your disobedient Lives, it appears *you will not*. If you will, why do you not? Why have you not done it all this while? and why do you not fall upon it yet? Your Wills have the command of your Lives. We may certainly conclude that you are unwilling to turn, when you do not Turn. And *why will you* not? Can you give any Reason for it that is worthy to be called a Reason?

I that am but a worm, your fellow-

low creature, of a shallow capacity, dare challenge the wisest of you all, to reason the case with *me*, while I plead my Makers cause: And I need not be discouraged, when I know I plead but the cause that *God* pleadeth, and contend for *him* that will have the best at last. Had I but these two General Grounds against you, I am sure that you have no good Reason on your side.

I. I am sure it can be no good Reason, which is against the God of Truth and Reason. It cannot be Light that is contrary to the Sun. There is no knowledge in any Creature, but what it had from God, and therefore none can be wiser then God. It were damnable presumption for the highest Angel to compare with his Creator. What is it then for a lump of dirt, an ignorant sot, that knoweth not himself, nor his own soul,

that

that knoweth but little of the things which he seeth, yea that is more ignorant then many of his neighbours, to set himself against the wisdom of the Lord? It is one of the fullest discoveries of the horrible wickedness of carnal men, and the stark madness of such in sin, that so silly a mole dare contradict his Maker, and call in question the word of God. Yea that those people in our Parishes, that are so beastly ignorant, that they cannot give us a reasonable answer concerning the very Principles of Religion, are yet so wise in their own conceit, that they dare question the plainest truths of God, yea contradict them, and cavil against them, when they can scarce speak sense, and will believe them no further then agreeth with their foolish wisdom

2. And as I know that God must needs be in the right, so I know

know the *Caſe* is ſo palpable and groſs which he pleadeth againſt, that no man can have reaſon for it. Is it poſſible that a man can have any Reaſon to break his Maſters Laws? and reaſon to diſhonour the Lord of Glory? and reaſon to abuſe the Lord that bought him? Is it poſſible that a man can have any good reaſon to damn his own Immortal ſoul? Mark the Lords queſtion *Turn ye, Turn ye, why will you die?*] Is eternal *death* a thing to be deſired? Are you in Love with Hell? What reaſon have you wilfully to periſh? If you think you have ſome reaſon to *ſin*, ſhould you not Remember that *death is the wages of ſin? Rom.* 6. 23. and think whether you have any Reaſon to undoe your ſelves, body and ſoul for ever? You ſhould not only ask whether you love the Adder, but whether you love the ſting. It is ſuch a thing

thing for a man to caſt away his everlaſting happineſs, and to ſin againſt God, that no good reaſon can be given for it: but the more any man pleads for it, the madder he ſheweth himſelf to be. Had you a Lordſhip or a Kingdom offered you for every ſin that you commit, it were not reaſon, but madneſs to accept it. Could you by every ſin obtain the higheſt thing on earth that fleſh deſireth, it were of no conſiderable value to perſwade you in reaſon to commit it. If it were to pleaſe your greateſt or deareſt friends, or to obey the greateſt Prince on earth, or to ſave your lives, or to eſcape the greateſt earthly Miſery, all theſe are of no conſideration, to draw a man in reaſon to the committing of one ſin. If it were a right hand, or a right eye that would hinder your ſalvation, it is the gainfulleſt way to caſt it away,

rather.

rather then to go to Hell to save it. For there's no saving a part, when you lose the whole. So exceeding great are the matters of Eternity, that nothing in this world deserveth once to be named in comparison with them: Nor can any earthly thing, though it were Life, or Crowns, or Kingdoms, be a reasonable excuse for the neglect of matters of such high and Everlasting Consequence. A man can have no reason to cross his ultimate End. Heaven is such a thing, that if you lose it, nothing can supply the want, or make up your loss. And Hell is such a thing that if you suffer it, nothing can remove your misery, or give you ease and comfort. And therefore nothing can be a valuable consideration to excuse you for neglecting your own salvation. For saith our Saviour, *What shall it profit a man to win*

all

all the world, and lose his own soul? *Mark* 8. 36.

Oh Sirs, that you did but know what matters they are that we are now speaking to you of! The Saints in Heaven have other kind of thoughts of these things. If the Devil could come to them that live in the sight and love of God, and should offer them a cup of Ale, or a Whore, or merry company, or sports, to tice them away from God and Glory, I pray you tell me, how do you think they would entertain the motion? Nay, or if he should offer them to be Kings on the earth, Do you think this would tice them down from Heaven! O with what hatred and holy scorn would they disdain and reject the motion! And why should not you do so, that have Heaven opened to your faith, if you had but faith to see it? There's never a soul in hell but knows by

this

this time, that it was a mad exchange to let go heaven for fleshly pleasure; and that it is not a little mirth, or pleasure, or worldly riches, or honour, or the good Will or Word of men, that will quench Hell-fire, or make him a saver that loseth his soul. O if you had heard what I believe, if you had seen what I believe, and that on the credit of the word of God, you would say There can be no reason to warrant a man to damn his soul: You durst not sleep quietly another night before you had resolved to Turn and Live.

If you see a man put his hand into the fire till it burn off, you'l marvail at it: but this is a thing that a man may have Reason for, as Bishop *Cranmer* had when he burnt off his hand for subscribing to Popery. If you see a man cut off a leg or an arm, its a sad sight; but

but this is a thing that a man *may* have *good reason* for: as many a man doth it to save his life. If you see a man give his body to be burnt to ashes, and to be tormented with strappado's and racks, and refuse deliverance when it is offered: this is a hard case to flesh and blood: But this a man may have good *reason* for; as you may see in *Heb.* 11.33,34,35,36. and as many an hundred Martys have done. But for a man to forsake the Lord that made him, and for a man to run into the fire of Hell, when he is *told* of it, and intreated to Turn that he may be saved; this is a thing that can have *no Reason* in the world, that is *Reason indeed*, to justifie or excuse it. For *Heaven* will pay for the loss of any thing that we can lose to get it, or for any labour which we bestow for it. But nothing can pay for the loss of Heaven.

I beſeech you now let this word come nearer to your hearts. As you are convinced that you have no Reaſon to deſtroy your ſelves, ſo tell me what Reaſon have you to refuſe to Turn, and live to God. What Reaſon hath the veri-eſt worldling, or drunkard, or ignorant careleſs ſinner of you all, why you ſhould not be as holy as any you know, and be as careful for your ſouls as any other? Will not hell be as hot to *you* as to *others*? Should not your *own* ſouls be as dear to *you* as *theirs* to *them*? Hath not God as much *authority* over *you*? Why then will you not become a ſanctified people as well as they?

O Sirs, when God bringeth the matter down to the very Principles of nature, and ſhews you that you have no more reaſon to be ungodly then you have to damn your own ſouls; if yet you will not underſtand

underſtand and Turn, it ſeems a Deſperate caſe that you are in.

And now either you *have* Reaſon for what you do, or you *have not*. If *not*; will you go on againſt Reaſon it ſelf? Will you do that which you have *no Reaſon* for? But if you think you have, produce them, and make the beſt of your matter. Reaſon the caſe a little with me your fellow-creature, which is far eaſier then to reaſon the caſe with God. Tell me man here before the Lord, as if thou wert to die this hour, Why ſhouldſt thou not reſolve to Turn this day, before thou ſtir from the place thou ſtandeſt in? What Reaſon haſt thou to deny, or to delay? Haſt thou any Reaſon that ſatisfieth thine *own Conſcience* for it? Or any that thou dareſt own and plead at the bar of God? If thou haſt, let us hear them: bring

them forth, and make them good. But alas, what poor ſtuff, what nonſenſe inſtead of reaſon do we daily hear from ungodly men? But for their neceſſity I ſhould be aſhamed to name them.

1. One ſaith, *If none ſhall be ſaved but ſuch Converted and Sanctified ones as you talk of, then heaven would be but empty; then God help a great many.*

Anſw. What! it ſeems you think that God doth not know, or elſe that he is not to be believed! Meaſure not all by your ſelves; God hath thouſands and millions of his ſanctified ones: but yet they are few in compariſon of the world, as Chriſt himſelf hath told us, *Matthew* 7. 13, 14. *Luke* 12. 32. It better beſeems you to make that uſe of this truth which Chriſt teacheth you: *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; for ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way*

that

that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; but wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many they be that go in thereat.] Luke 13. 22, 23, 24. [*Fear not little flock* (ſaith Chriſt to his ſanctified ones) *for it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you the Kingdom*, Luke 12. 32.

Object. 2. *I am ſure, if ſuch as I go to Hell, we ſhall have ſtore of company.*

Anſw. And will that be any eaſe or comfort to you? Or do you think you may not have company enough in Heaven? Will you be undone for company? Or will you not believe that God will execute his threatnings, becauſe they be ſo many that are guilty? All theſe are ſilly unreaſonable conceits.

Object. 3. *But are not all men ſinners, even the beſt of you all?*

Answ. But all are not *unconverted sinners.* The godly live not in groſs ſin; and their very infirmities are their grief, and burden, which they daily long, and pray, and ſtrive to be rid of. Sin hath not dominion over them.

Object. 4. *I do not ſee that Profeſſors are any better then other men; They will over-reach, and oppreſs, and are as Covetous as any.*

Answ. What ever hypocrites are, its not ſo with thoſe that are ſanctified. God hath thouſands and thouſands that are otherwiſe: Though the malicious world doth accuſe them of what they can never prove, and of that which never entred into their hearts. And commonly they charge them with heart-ſins, which none can ſee but God, becauſe they can charge them with no ſuch wickedneſs in their lives, as they are guilty of themſelves.

Object.

Object. 5. *But I am no whore-monger, nor drunkard, nor oppressor, and therefore why should you call upon me to be Converted?*

Answ. As if you were not *born after the flesh*, and had not lived after the flesh as well as others! Is it not as great a sin as any of these, for a man to have an earthly mind, and to love the world above God, and to have an unbelieving unhumbled heart? Nay, let me tell you more: that many persons that avoid disgracefull sins, are as fast glued to the world, and as much slaves to the flesh, and as strange to God, and averse to heaven in their more civil course, as others are in their more shamefull notorious sins.

Object. 6. *But I mean no body any harm, nor do no harm: and why then should God condemn me?*

Answ. Is it no harm to neglect the Lord that made thee, and the

work for which thou cameſt into the world, and to prefer the creatures before the Creator, and to neglect the grace that is dayly offered there? It is the depth of thy ſinfulneſs to be ſo inſenſible of it; The dead feel not that they are dead. If once thou wert made alive, thou wouldſt ſee more amiſs in thy ſelf, and marvel at thy ſelf for making ſo light of it.

Object. 7. *I think you would make men mad under pretence of Converting them: It is enough to rack the brains of ſimple people to muſe ſo much on matters too high for them.*

Anſw. 1. Can you be madder then you are already? or at leaſt can there be a more dangerous madneſs, then to neglect your everlaſting welfare, and wilfully undo your ſelves? 2. A man is never well in his wits till he be Converted: He never knows God,

God, nor knows sin, nor knows Christ, nor knows the world, nor himself, nor what his business is on earth, so as to set himself about it, till he be converted. The Scripture saith that the wicked are *unreasonable men*, 2 *Thes.* 3.2. and that the *wisdom of the world is foolishness with God*, 1 *Cor.* 1.20. and *Luke* 15.17. its said of the Prodigal that *when he came to himself* he resolved to Return. Its a wise world when men will disobey God, and run to Hell for fear of being out of their wits.

2. What is there in the work that Christ calls you to, that should drive a man out of his wits? Is it the Loving of God, and calling upon him, and comfortable thinking of the glory to come, and the forsaking of our sins, and loving one another, and delighting our selves in the service of God? are these such things

as ſhould make men mad?

3. And whereas you ſay that theſe matters are too high for us, you accuſe God himſelf for making this our work, and giving us his word, and commanding all that will be bleſſed to *meditate in it day and night*. Are the matters which we were *made for*, and which we *live for*, *too high* for us to meddle with? This is plainly to unman us, and to make beaſts of us, as if we were like them, that muſt meddle with no higher matters, then what belongs to fleſh and earth. If heaven be too high for you to think on and provide for, it will be too high for you ever to poſſeſs.

4. If God *ſhould* ſometimes ſuffer any weak-headed perſon to be diſtracted by thinking of eternal things, this is becauſe they miſunderſtand them, and run without a guide: and of the two I had rather

rather be in the case of such an one, then of the mad unconverted world, that take their distraction to be their wisdom.

Object. 8. *I do not think that God cares so much what men think, or speak, or do, as to make so great a matter of it.*

Answ. It seems then you take the word of God to be false, and then what will you believe? But your own reason might teach you better, if you believe not the Scriptures: For you see God set not so light by us, but that he vouchsafed to make us, and still preserveth us, and daily upholdeth us, and provideth for us: And will any wise man make a curious frame for nothing? will you make or buy a Clock or Watch, and daily look to it, and not care whether it go true or false? Surely if you believe not a particular eye of providence observing your hearts and lives

lives, you cannot believe or expect any particular providence to observe your wants and trouble, to relieve You. And if God had so little cared for you as you imagine, you would never have lived till now: An hundred diseases would have striven which should first destroy you; Yea the Devils would have haunted you, and fetcht you away alive, as the great fishess devour the less, and as Ravenous birds and beasts devour others. You cannot think that God made man for no end or use: And if he made him for any, it was sure for himself. And can you think he cares not whether his ends be accomplished, and whether we do the work that we are made for?

Yea by this Atheistical objection you make God to have made and upheld *all the world* in vain. For what are all other lower Creatures for, but for

for man? What doth the earth but bear us, and nouriſh us? and the beaſts do ſerve us with their labours and lives, and ſo of the reſt. And hath God made ſo glorious an habitation, and ſet man to dwell in it, and made all his ſervants, and now doth he look for nothing at his hands? nor care how he thinks, or ſpeaks, or lives? This is moſt unreaſonable.

Object. 9. *It was a better world when men did not make ſo much ado in Religion.*

Anſw. It hath ever been the cuſtom to praiſe the times paſt. That world that you ſpeak of, was wont to ſay, it was a better world in their fore-fathers daies, and ſo did they of their fore-fathers: This is but an old cuſtom; becauſe we all feel the evil of our own times, but we ſee not that which was before us.

3. Perhaps you ſpeak as you think:

think: Worldlings think the world is at the beſt when it is agreeable to their minds: and when they have moſt mirth and worldly pleaſure. And I doubt not but the Devil as well as you, would ſay, that then it *was a better world*: for then he had more ſervice, and leſs diſturbance. But the world is at the beſt, when God is moſt loved, regarded and obeyed. And how elſe will you know when the world is good or bad but by this?

Object. 10. *There are ſo many waies and Religions that we know not which to be of, and therefore we will be even as we are.*

Anſw. Becauſe there are *many*, will you be of that way that you may be *ſure* is wrong? *None* are further out of the way, then worldly, fleſhly, Unconverted ſinners. For they do not only err in this or that opinion, as many ſects do,

do, but in the very *ſcope and drift* of their lives. If you were going a journey that your life lay on, would you ſtop or turn again, becauſe you met with ſome croſs wayes, or becauſe you ſaw ſome travellers go the horſe way, and ſome the foot way, and ſome perhaps break over the hedge, yea and ſome miſs the way? or would you not rather be the more carefull to enquire the way? If you have ſome ſervants that know not how to do your work right, and ſome that are unfaithfull, would you take it well at any of the reſt that would therefore be idle and do you no ſervice becauſe they ſee the reſt ſo bad?

Object. 11. *I do not ſee that it goes any better with thoſe that are ſo godly then with other men. They are as poor, and in as much trouble as others.*

Anſw. And perhaps in much more

more, when God ſees it meet. They take not earthly proſperity for their wages. They have laid up their treaſures and hopes in another world, or elſe they are not Chriſtians indeed. The leſs they *have*, the more is *behind*; and they are content to wait till then.

Object. 12. *When you have ſaid all that you can, I am reſolved to hope well, and truſt in God, and do as well as I can, and not make ſo much ado.*

Anſw. 1. Is that *doing as well as you can*, when you will not Turn to God, but your heart is againſt his holy and diligent ſervice? It is as well as you *will* indeed: but thats your miſery.

2. My deſire is, that you ſhould Hope and Truſt in God: But for what is it that you will Hope? Is it to be ſaved if you turn-

turn and be ſanctified? For this you have Gods promiſe; and therefore hope for it and ſpare not. But if you hope to be ſaved without Converſion and an Holy Life, this is not to Hope in God, but in Satan or your ſelves. For God hath given you no ſuch promiſe, but told you the contrary: but its Satan and ſelf-love that made you ſuch promiſes, and raiſed you to ſuch Hopes.

Well, if theſe and ſuch as theſe be all you have to ſay againſt Converſion and an Holy Life, your *All* is *Nothing*, and worſe then Nothing: And if theſe and ſuch as theſe ſeem Reaſons ſufficient to perſwade you to forſake God, and caſt your ſelves into Hell, the Lord deliver us from ſuch Reaſons, and from ſuch blind underſtandings, and from ſuch ſenſleſs hardened hearts. Dare you ſtand to ever an one

of

of these Reasons at the Barr of God? Do you think it will then serve your turn to say, *Lord, I did not Turn because I had so much to do in the world, or because I did not like the lives of some professors, or because I saw men of so many minds.* O how easily will the light of that day confound and shame such reasonings as these? Had you the world to look after? Let the world which you served now pay your wages, and save you if it can. Had you not a *better world* to look after *first*? And were you not commanded to *seek first Gods Kingdom and Righteousness*, and promised, that *other things should be added to you? Mat.* 6. 33. And were you not told, that *godliness was profitable to all things, having the promise of this life, and of that which is to come?* 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. Did the sins of professors hinder you?

you

You ſhould rather have been the more *heedfull*, and learned by their falls to beware, and have been the more *carefull*, and not the more *careleſs*: It was the *Scripture*, and not *their lives*, that was your *Rule*. Did the many opinions of the world hinder you? Why, the Scripture that was your Rule did teach you but one way, and that was the right way: If you had followed that even in ſo much as was plain and eaſie, you ſhould never have miſcarried. Will not ſuch Anſwers as theſe confound and ſilence you? If theſe will not, God hath thoſe that will: when he asketh the man, *Mat.* 22. 12. *Friend, how cameſt thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?* that is, What doſt thou in my Church among profeſſ'd Chriſtians, without an holy heart and life? What anſwer did he make? Why the text ſaith, *He was ſpeechleſs*;

less: he had nothing to say. The clearness of the case, and the Majesty of God will then easily stop the mouths of the most confident of you, though you will not be put down by any thing that we can say to you now, but will make good your cause, be it never so bad. I know already that never a Reason that now you can give, will do you any good at last, when your case must be opened before the Lord and all the world.

Nay, I scarce think that your own Consciences are well satisfied with your Reasons. For if they are, it seems then you have not so much as a *Purpose to Repent*. But if you do purpose to Repent, it seems you do not put much confidence in your Reasons which you bring against it.

What say you yet Unconverted sinners? Have you any good Reason to give, why you should not

not Turn, and presently Turn with all your hearts? Or will you go to Hell in despight of Reason it self? Bethink you what you do in time: for it will shortly be too late to bethink you. Can you find any fault with God, or his work, or wages? Is he a bad Master? Is the Devil whom you serve, a better? or is the flesh a better? Is there any *harm* in an holy life? is a life of worldliness and ungodliness better? Do you think in your Consciences that it would do you any harm to be Converted and live an holy life? What harm *can* it do you? Is it *harm* to you to have the Spirit of Christ within you? and to have a cleansed purified heart? If it be bad to be Holy, why doth God say, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*? 1 *Pet.* 1.15,16. *Leviticus* 20.7. Is it *evil* to be like *God*? Is it not said that *God made man in his Image*? Why this

Holiness

Holineſs in his *Image*: This *Adam* loſt, and this Chriſt by his Word and Spirit would reſtore to you, as he doth to all that he will ſave. Why were you *Baptized into the Holy Ghoſt*, and why do you Baptize your children into the Holy Ghoſt as your *Sanctifier*, if you will not be ſanctified by him, but think it an hurt to you to be ſanctified? Tell me truly, as before the Lord, Though you are loth to live an Holy life, had you not rather *die* in the caſe of thoſe that *do ſo* then of others? If you were to die this day, had you not rather *die* in the caſe of a Converted man, then of the Unconverted? of an holy and heavenly man, then of a carnal earthly man: and would you not ſay as *Baalam*, Numbers 23 10. *Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my laſt end be like his.*] And why will you not now be of the mind that you will

be

be of then? *First* or *last* you must come to this, either to be Converted, or wish you had been, when it is too late.

But what is it that you are afraid of losing if you Turn? Is it your *friends*? you will but *change* them: *God* will be your friend, and *Christ* and the *Spirit* will be your friend, and every *Christian* will be your friend. You will get *one friend* that will stand you in more stead then all the friends in the world could have done. The friends you *lose*, would but have ticed you to hell, but could not have delivered you: But the friend you *get*, will save you from hell and bring you to his own eternal Rest.

Is it your *pleasures* that you are afraid of losing? You think you shall never have a merry day again, if once you be Converted. Alas, that you should think it a greater

greater pleasure to live in foolish sports and merriments, and please your flesh, then to live in the Believing thoughts of glory, and in the love of God, and in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, in which the state of Grace consisteth, *Romans* 14. 17. If it be a greater pleasure to you to think of your Lands and Inheritance (if you were Lords of all the Country) then it is to a child to play for pins: why should it not be a greater Joy to you to think of the Kingdom of Heaven being yours, then of all the riches or pleasures of the world? As it is but foolish childishness that makes children so delight in gawds, that they would not leave them for all your Lands: so it is but foolish worldliness, and fleshliness, and wickedness, that makes you so much delight in your houses, and lands, and meat, and drink, and

ease

eaſe, and honour, as that you would not part with them for the heavenly delights. But what will you do for pleaſure when theſe are gone? Do you not *think of that?* When *your* pleaſures end in horrour, and go out with a ſtinking ſnuff, the Pleaſures of the Saints are then at the beſt. I have had my ſelf but a little taſte of the heavenly pleaſures in the forethoughts of the bleſſed approaching day, and in the preſent perſwaſions of the Love of God in Chriſt: but I have taken too deep a draught of earthly pleaſures (ſo that you may ſee, if I be partial, it is on your ſide:) and yet I muſt profeſs from that little experience, that there is no compariſon: there is more joy to be had in a day (if the Sun of life ſhine clear upon us) in the ſtate of Holineſs, then in an whole life of ſinfull pleaſures. I had *rather*

be a door-keeper in the house of God, then to dwell in the Tents of wickedness, Psalm 84. 10. *A day in his Courts is better then a thousand any where else*, *Psal.* 84. 10. The mirth of the wicked is like the laughter of a mad man that knows not his own misery; and therefore *Solomon* saith of such laughter, *It is mad*: and of mirth, *What doth it?* *Eccles.* 2. 2. And *Eccles.* 7. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *It is better to go to the house of mourning, then to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better then laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning: but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth: It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, then to hear the song of fools: For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool.*] All the

the pleaſures of fleſhly things, is but like the ſcratching of a man that hath the itch: It is his diſeaſe that makes him deſire it: and a wiſe man had rather be without his pleaſure, and be troubled with his itch. Your loudeſt laughter is but like that of a man that is tickled: he laughs when he hath no cauſe of joy. And it is a wiſer thing for a man to give all his eſtate and his life to be tickled to make him laugh, then for you to part with the love of God, and the comforts of Holineſs, and the Hopes of Heaven, and to caſt your ſelves into damnation, that you may have your fleſh tickled with the pleaſures of ſin for a little while. Judge as you are men, whether this be a wiſe mans part. It is but your carnal unſanctified nature that makes an holy life ſeem grievous to you, and a courſe of ſenſuality ſeem more delightfull.

If you will but Turn, the Holy Ghoſt will give you another *Nature* and *Inclination*; and then it will be more pleaſant to you to be *rid* of your ſin, then now it is to *keep* it; and you will then ſay, that you know not what a comfortable life was till now, and that it was never well with you, till God and Holineſs were your Delight.

Queſt. *BUT how cometh it to paſs that men ſhould be ſo unreaſonable in the matters of their ſalvation? they have Wit enough in other matters, what makes them ſo loth to be converted, that there ſhould need ſo many words in ſo plain a caſe, and all will not do, but the moſt will live and die Unconverted?*

Anſw. To name them only in a few words, the cauſes are theſe.

1. Men

1. Men are naturally *in Love* with earth and flesh. They are born sinners, and their nature hath an enmity to God and godliness, as the Nature of the Serpent hath to a man: And when all that we can say goes against an habituall inclination of their natures, no marvail if it little prevail.

2. They are in *Darkness*, and know not the very things which they hear. Like a man that was born blind, and hears an high commendation of the light: but what will *hearing* do, unless he see it? They know not what God is, nor what is the power of the Cross of Christ, nor what the Spirit of holiness is, nor what it is to live in love by faith: They know not the certainty, and suitableness, and excellency of the heavenly inheritance. They know not what Conversion, and an holy mind and Conversation is, even

when they hear of it. They are in a miſt of ignorance. They are loſt and bewildred in ſin: like a man that hath loſt himſelf in the night, and knows not where he is, nor how to come to himſelf again, till the day-light do recover him.

3. They are wilfully confident that they need no *Converſion*, but ſome *partial amendment*, but that they are in the way to heaven already, and are Converted when they are not. And if you meet a man that is quite out of his way, you may long enough call on him to turn back again, if he will not believe you that he is out of his way.

4. They are become ſlaves to their fleſh, and drowned in the world to make proviſion for it. Their luſts, and paſſions, and appetites have diſtracted them, and got ſuch an hand over them, that they

they cannot tell how to deny them, nor how to mind any thing else. So that the drunkard saith, *I love a cup of good drink, and I cannot forbear it.* The glutton saith, *I love good chear, and I cannot forbear.* The fornicator saith, *I love to have my lust fulfilled, and I cannot forbear.* And the gamester *loves* to have his sports, and he cannot forbear. So that they are become even captivated slaves to their flesh, and their very *wilfulness* is become an *impotency*; and what they *would not* do, they say they *cannot*. And the worldling is so taken up with earthly things, that he hath neither heart, nor mind, nor time for heavenly: but as in *Pharaohs* dream, *Gen.* 4. 14. the lean kine did eat up the fat ones: so this lean and barren earth doth eat up all the thoughts of heaven.

5. Some are so carried away

by the eſteem of evill company, that they are poſſeſſed with hard thoughts of a godly life, by hearing them ſpeak againſt it: or at leaſt, they think they may venture to do as they ſee moſt do: and ſo they hold on in their ſinfull waies; and when *one* is cut off and caſt into Hell, and *another* ſnatcht away from among them to the ſame condemnation, it doth not much daunt them, becauſe they ſee not whither they are gone: poor wretches, they hold on in their ungodlineſs, for all this, for they little know that their companions are now lamenting it in torments. In *Luke* 16. the rich man in hell would fain have had one to warn his five Brethren, leſt they ſhould come to that place of torment. Its like he knew their minds & lives, and knew that they were haſting thither, and little dreamt that he was there, yea and would

would little have believed one that would have told them so. I remember a passage that a Gentleman yet living told me he saw upon a bridge over *Severn*: A man was driving a flock of fat Lambs, and something meeting them, and hindring their passage, one of the Lambs leapt upon the wall of the Bridge, and his legs slipping from under him, he fell into the stream: the rest seeing him, did one after one leap over the Bridge into the stream, and were all, or almost all drowned; Those that were *behind* did little know what was become of them that were gone before, but thought they might venture to follow their companions: but as soon as ever they were over the wall, and falling headlong, the case was altered. Even so it is with Unconverted Carnal men. *One*

Mr. *R. Rowly* of *Shrewsbury*, upon *Acham*-bridge.

dyeth by them and drops into hell, and *another* follows the same way: and yet they will go after them, because they think not whether they are gone. Oh but when death hath once opened their eyes, and they see what's on the other side of the wall, even in another world, then what would they give to be where they were!

6. Moreover, they have a subtile malicious enemy, that is unseen of them, and playes his game in the dark: and it is his principal business to hinder their Conversion, and therefore to keep them where they are, by perswading them not to believe the Scriptures, or not to trouble their minds with these matters: or by perswading them to think ill of a godly life, or to think that its more ado then needs, and that they may be saved without Conversion, and without all this stir: and that God is

so

ſo mercifull that he will not damn any ſuch as they : or at leaſt that they may ſtay a little longer, and take their pleaſure, and follow the world a little longer yet, and then let it go and repent hereafter. And by ſuch jugling deluding cheats as theſe, the Devil keeps the moſt in his captivity, and leadeth them to his miſery.

Theſe, and ſuch like impediments as theſe, do keep ſo many thouſands Unconverted, when *God* hath *done* ſo much, and *Chriſt* hath *ſuffered* ſo much, and *Miniſters* have *ſaid* ſo much for their Converſion; when their *Reaſons* are ſilenced, and they are not able to anſwer the Lord that calls after them, [*Turn ye, Turn ye, why will ye die?*] yet all comes to nothing with the greateſt part of them : and they leave us no more to do after all, but to ſit down and lament their wilfull miſery.

I Have now ſhewed you the Reaſonableneſs of Gods commands, and the unreaſonableneſs of wicked mens diſobedience. If nothing will ſerve turn, but men will yet refuſe to Turn, we are next to conſider, who it is *long* of if they be damned. And this brings me up to the laſt Doctrine, which is,

Doct. 7. *THAT if after all this men will not Turn, it is not long of God that they are condemned, but of themſelves, even their own wilfulneſs. They die becauſe they will die: That is, becauſe they will not Turn.*

If you will go to hell, what remedy! God here acquits himſelf of

of your blood: it shall not lie on *him* if you be lost. A negligent Minister may draw it upon *him*: and those that encourage you, or hinder you not in sin, may draw it upon *them*: but be sure of it, it shall not lie upon God. Saith the Lord concerning his unprofitable Vineyard, *Isaiah* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. [*Judge I pray you betwixt me and my Vineyard: What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it?* When he had *planted it in a fruitfull soil, and fenced it, and gathered out the stones, and planted it with the choicest Vine*: What should he have done more to it? He hath made you men, and endued you with Reason; he hath furnished you with all external necessaries; all creatures are at your service. He hath given you a righteous perfect Law. When you had broke it, and undone your selves,

ſelves, he had pity on you, and ſent his Son by a miracle of condeſcending mercy to die for you, and be a ſacrifice for your ſins, and he *was in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf*. The Lord Jeſus hath made you a deed of gift of himſelf, and eternal life with him, on the condition you will but accept it and return. He hath on this reaſonable condition offered you the free pardon of all your ſins: he hath written this in his Word, and ſealed it by his Spirit, and ſent it you by his Miniſters: they have made the offer to you an hundred and an hundred times, and called you to accept it, and to turn to God. They have in his name entreated you, and reaſoned the caſe with you, and anſwered all your frivolous objections. He hath waited on you, and ſtaid your leiſure, and ſuffered you to abuſe him to his face. He hath mercifully

fully sustained you in the midst of your sin: He hath compassed you about with all sorts of mercies: He hath also intermixt afflictions to mind you of your folly, and call you to your wits: And his Spirit hath been often striving with your hearts, and saying there, [*Turn sinner, Turn to him that calleth thee: Whither art thou going? What art thou doing? Dost thou know what will be the end? How long wilt thou hate thy friends, and love thine enemies? When wilt thou let go all and Turn, and deliver up thy self to God, and give thy Redeemer the possession of thy soul? When shall it once be?*] These pleadings have been used with thee. And when thou hast delayed, thou hast been urged to make haste, and God hath called to thee, [*To day, while it is called to day, harden not thy heart: Why not now without any more delay?*

lay? Life hath been ſet before you: The Joyes of Heaven have been opened to you in the Goſpel: The Certainty of them hath been manifeſted: The certainty of the everlaſting Torments of the damned hath been declared to you: Unleſs you would have had a *ſight* of *Heaven and Hell*, what could you deſire more? Chriſt hath been as it were ſet forth crucified before your eyes, *Gal.* 3. 1. You have been an hundred times told that you are but loſt men till you come unto him: As oft have you been told of the evil of ſin, of the vanity of ſin, the world, and all the pleaſures and wealth it can afford: of the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of your lives, and the endleſs duration of the Joy or Torment of the life to come. All this, and more then this have you been told, and told again, even till you were aweary of hearing it, and till you could make the lighter

lighter of it, because you had so often heard it; like the Smiths dog, that is brought by custom to sleep under the noise of the hammers, and when the sparks do flie about his ears: and though all this have not converted you, yet you are alive, and might have mercy to this day, if you had but hearts to entertain it. And now let Reason it self be Judge; whether it be long of God or you, if after all this you be unconverted and be damned? If you *die now*, it is because you will die. What should be said more to you? Or what course should be taken, that is liker to prevail? Are you able to say and make it good, *We would fain have been converted, and become new creatures, but we could not; we would fain have forsaken our sins, but could not; we would have changed our company, and our thoughts, and our discourse,*

but

but we would not. Why could you not if you would? What hindred you, but the wickedneſs of your hearts? Who *forced* you to ſin? or who did hold you back from Duty? Had not you the ſame teaching, and time, and liberty to be godly as your godly neighbours had? Why then could not you have been godly as well as they? Were the Church-doors ſhut againſt you? or did you not keep away your ſelves? or ſit and ſleep, or hear as if you did not hear? Did God put in any exceptions againſt you in his word, when he invited ſinners to return, and when he promiſed mercy to thoſe that do return?] Did he ſay, [*I will pardon all that repent except thee?*] Did he ſhut you out from the liberty of his holy worſhip? Did he forbid you to pray to him any more then others? You know he did not. God did not

not *drive* you away from him, but you forsook him, and run away your selves. And when he called you to him, you *would* not come. If God had *excepted* you out of the general promise and offer of mercy, or had said to you: [*Stand off, I will have nothing to do with such as you: Pray not to me, for I will not hear you: If you repent never so much, and cry for mercy never so much, I will not regard you:*] If God had left you nothing to trust to, but desperation, then you had had a fair excuse. You might have said, [*To what end should I repent and turn, when it will do no good?*] But this was not your case. You might have had Christ to be your Lord and Saviour, your Head and Husband, as well as others: and you *would not*: because you felt not your selves sick enough for the Physitian, and because you could

could not ſpare your diſeaſe: In your hearts you ſaid as thoſe rebels, *Luke* 19. 14. [*We will not have this man to reign over us.*] Chriſt *would have gathered you under the wings* of his ſalvation, *and you would not*, *Mat.* 23. 37. What deſires of your welfare did the Lord expreſs in his holy word? With what compaſſion did he ſtand over you, and ſay, [*O that my People had hearkened unto me, and that they had walked in my wayes!* Pſal. 81. 13. *O that there were ſuch a heart in this People, that they would fear me, and keep all my comandments alwaies, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!* Deut. 5. 20. [*O that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this! and that they would conſider their latter end!*] *Deut.* 32. 29. He would have been your God, and done all for you that your ſouls could well deſire; but you

you loved the world and your flesh above him, and therefore you *would not hearken* to him: though you complemented with him, and gave him high Titles, yet when it came to the closing, *you would have none of him, Psal.* 81. 11, 12. No marvel then if *He gave you up to your own hearts Lusts, and you walked in your own Counsels.*] He condescended to reason and plead the case with you, and ask you [*What is there in me or my service that you should be so much against me! What harm have I done thee sinner! Have I deserved this unkind dealing at thy hand? Many mercies have I shewed thee; for which of them dost thou thus despise me? Is it I, or is it Satan that is thy enemy? Is it I, or is it thy carnal self that would undo thee? Is it an holy life, or a life of sin that thou hast cause to flie from? If thou be undone, thou procurest this to thy self*

self by forsaking me the Lord that would have saved thee: Jer. 2. 17. *Doth not thy own wickedness correct thee, and thy sin reprove thee; that thou mayst see that it is an evil and bitter thing that thou hast forsaken me?* Jer. 2. 19. *What iniquity have your found in me, that you have followed after vanity and forsaken me?* Jer. 2. 5, 6.] He calleth out as it were to the brutes to hear the controversie he hath against you, Mic. 2. 3, 4, 5. *Hear O ye mountains the Lords controversie, and ye strong foundations of the earth; for the Lord hath a Controversie with his people, and he will plead with Israel. O my people, what have I done unto thee: and wherein have I wearied thee? testifie against me, for I brought thee up out of Egypt, and redeemed thee, &c. Hear O Heavens, and give ear O earth, for the Lord hath spoken. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have*

rebelled

rebelled against me. The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib: but Israel *doth not know, my people doth not consider! Ah sinful Nation! a people laden with iniquity, a Seed of evil-doers!* &c. Isaiah 1. 2, 3, 4. [*Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee?* Deut. 3. 26.] When he saw that you forsook him even for nothing, and turned away from your Lord and Life, to hunt after the chaffe and feathers of the world, he told you of your folly, and called you to a more profitable employment, *Isa.* 55. 1, 2, 3. [*Wherefore do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness. Encline your*

your ear, and come unto me: hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David: ——— *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found: call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, ver.* 6,7.] And so *Isa.* 1. 16, 17, 18. And when you would not hear, what complaints have you put him to, charging it on you as your wilfulness and stubbornness, *Jer.* 2. 12, 13. [*Be astonished O heavens at this, and be horribly afraid.* ——— *For my People have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters; and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.*] Many a time hath Christ pro-

proclaimed that free invitation to you, *Revel.* 22.17. *Let him that is a thirſt come: and whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*] But you put him to complain after all his offers, [*They will not come to me that they may have life, John* 5.40.] He hath invited you to feaſt with him in the Kingdom of his grace, and you have had excuſes from your grounds, and your cattel, and your worldly buſineſs, and when you *would* not come, you have ſaid you *could not*: and provoked him to reſolve that you ſhould never *taſte of his Supper*, *Luke* 14.15, *to* 25.] And who is it *long* of now but your ſelves? and what can you ſay is the chief cauſe of your damnation, but your own *Wills*? You would be damned. The whole caſe is laid open by Chriſt himſelf, *Prov.* 1. from the 20. to the end. [*Wiſdom cryeth without, ſhe uttereth her*

voice in the ſtreets, ſhe crieth in the chief place of Concourſe, ——— How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity, and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproofs; behold I will pour out my ſpirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed; I have ſtretched out my hands, and no man regarded, but ye have ſet at naught all my counſel, and would none of my reproofs: I alſo will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind; when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you: then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not chooſe the fear of the Lord. They would none of my

my counsels: they despised all my reproof: Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But who so hearkeneth to me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from the fear of evil.] I thought best to recite the whole text at large to you, because it doth so fully shew the cause of the destruction of the wicked. It is not because *God* would not teach them, but because *they* would not learn. It is not because God would not Call them, but because they would not Turn at his reproof. Their *wilfulness* is their undoing.

Use.

FRom what hath been ſaid, you may further learn theſe following things.

1. From hence you may ſee, not only what blaſphemy and impiety it is, to lay the blame of mens deſtruction upon God, but alſo how unfit theſe wicked wretches are to bring in ſuch a charge againſt their Maker. They cry out upon God, and ſay, He gives them not grace, and his threatnings are ſevere, and God forbid that all ſhould be damned that be not Converted and Sanctified: and they think it hard meaſure that a ſhort ſin ſhould have an endleſs ſuffering? and if they be damned, they ſay, they cannot help it: When in the mean time, they are buſie about their own deſtruction, even

even cutting the throat of their own ſouls, and will not be perſwaded to hold their hands. They think *God* were *cruell* if *he* ſhould damn them; and yet they are ſo *cruell* to *themſelves* that they *will run* into the fire of Hell, when God hath told them it is a little before them, and neither intreaties, nor threatnings, nor any thing that can be ſaid, will ſtop them. We ſee them almoſt undone: Their careleſs, worldly, fleſhly lives do tell us that they are in the power of the Devil: we know if they die before they are Converted, all the world cannot ſave them; and knowing the uncertainty of their lives, we are afraid every day leſt they drop into the fire. And therefore we intreat them to pitty their own ſouls, and not to undo themſelves when mercy is at hand, and they *will not* hear us. We intreat them to caſt away their ſin,

and come to Christ without delay, and to have some mercy on themselves: but they will have none. And yet they think that God must be cruell if he condemn them. O wilfull wretched sinners! It is not *God* that is *cruell* to you: it is *you* that are *cruell* to your selves. You are told you must *Turn or burn*, and yet you *Turn not*. You are told that if you will needs keep your sins, you shall keep the Curse of God with them: and yet you *will* keep them. You are told that there is no way to *Happiness* but by *Holiness*, and yet you *will* not be Holy. What would you have God say more to you? What would you have him *do* with his Mercy? He offereth it you, and you will not have it. You are in the ditch of sin and misery, and he would give you his hand to help you out, and you refuse his help: he would cleanse you of your sins,

and

and you had rather keep them. You *love* your luſt, and *love your* gluttony, and ſports, and drunkenneſs, and *will not* let them go. Would you have him bring you to Heaven whether you will or no? Or would you have him bring you and your ſins to heaven together? Why, that's an impoſſibility; you may as well expect he ſhould turn the Sun into Darkneſs. What, an unſanctified fleſhly heart be in Heaven! it cannot be: *There entreth nothing that is unclean*, Revel. 21. 27. *For what Communion hath light with darkneſs, or Chriſt with* Belial? 2 *Corinth.* 6. 14, 15. *All the day long hath he ſtretched out his hand to a diſobedient and gainſaying people*, *Romans* 10. 25. What will you *do* now? Will you cry to God for *mercy*! why God calleth upon *you* to have *mercy* upon your ſelves, and you *will* not. Miniſters ſee the

poyſoned cup in the drunkards hand, and tell him, *There is poyſon in it*, and deſire him to have *Mercy* on his ſoul, and forbear, and he *will not* hear us: drink it he *muſt* and *will*: he *loves* it, and therefore though Hell come next, he ſaith, he *cannot help it*. What ſhould one ſay to ſuch men as theſe? We tell the ungodly careleſs worldling, *It is not ſuch a life that will ſerve the turn, or ever bring you to Heaven. If a Bear were at your back you would mend your pace; and when the curſe of God is at your back, and Satan and Hell are at your back, will you not ſtir, but ask what needs all this ado? Is an immmortal ſoul of no more worth? O have mercy upon your ſelves!* But they will have no mercy on themſelves, nor once regard us. We tell them, the end will be bitter. Who can dwell with the everlaſting fire? And yet they

they will have no mercy upon themselves. And yet will these shameless wretches say, that God is more mercifull then to condemn them, when it is themselves that cruelly and unmercifully *run* upon Condemnation; and if we should go to them with our hats in our hands, and intreat them, we cannot stop them. If we should fall down on our knees to them, we cannot stop them; but to Hell they *will*, and yet will not believe that they are going thither. If we beg of them for the sake of God that made them, and preserveth them; for the sake of Christ that died for them; for the sake of their own poor souls, to pitty themselves and go no further in the way to Hell; but come to Christ while his arms are open, and enter into a state of life while the door stands open, and now take mercy while mercy may be

had; they *will not* be perſwaded. If we ſhould *die* for it, we cannot get them ſo much as now and then to *conſider* with themſelves of the matter, and to Turn. And yet they can ſay, *I hope God will be merciful.* Did you ever conſider what he ſaith, *Iſa.* 27. 11. [*It is a people of no underſtanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour.*] If *another* man will not cloath you when you are naked, and feed you when you are hungry, you will ſay he is unmerciſull. If he ſhould caſt you into priſon, or beat and torment you, you would ſay, he is unmerciſull. And yet you will do a thouſand times more againſt your ſelves, even caſt away both ſoul and body for ever, and never complain of your own unmerciſulneſs. Yea and God that waited upon you all the while with his

mercy,

mercy, must be taken to be unmercifull, if he punish you after all this. Unless the holy God of Heaven will give these wretches leave to trample upon his Sons blood, and with the Jews, as it were again to spit in his face, and do despight to the Spirit of grace, and make a jest of sin, and a mock at holiness, and set more light by saving mercy, then by the filth of their fleshly pleasures, and unless after all this he will save them by the mercy which they cast away, and would none of, God himself must be called unmercifull by them. But he will be justified when he Judgeth, and he will not stand or fall at the bar of a sinfull worm.

I know there are many particular cavils that are brought by them against the Lord, but I shall not here stay to answer them particularly, having done it already in my

in my *Treatise of Judgement*, to which I shall refer them. Had the disputing part of the world been as carefull to avoid sin and destruction, as they have been busie in searching after the cause of them, and forward indirectly to impute it to God, they might have exercised their wits more profitably, and have less wronged God, and sped better themselves. When so ugly a monster as sin is within us, and so heavy a thing as punishment is on us, and so dreadfull a thing as Hell is before us, one would think it should be an easie question, who is in the fault, and whether God or man be the principal or culpable cause. Some men are such favourable Judges of themselves, that they are proner to accuse the Infinite Perfection and Goodness it self, then their own hearts: and imitate their first parents that said, *The Serpent tempted*

pted me, and the woman that thou gavest me, gave unto me, and I did eat,] secretly implying that God was the cause. So say they, [*The understanding that thou gavest me, was unable to discern; the will that thou gavest me, was unable to make a better choice: the objects which thou didst set before me, did entice me; the temptation which thou didst permit to assault me, prevailed against me.*] And some are so loth to think that God can make a self-determining creature, that they dare not deny him that which they take to be his prerogative, to be the determiner of the will in every sin, as the first efficient immediate physical cause. And many could be content to acquit God from so much causing of evil, if they could but reconcile it with his being the chief cause of good, as if truths would be no longer truths, then we are able to see them

them in their perfect order and coherence: becauſe our ravelled wits cannot ſet them right together, nor aſſign each truth its proper place, we preſume to conclude that ſome muſt be caſt away. This is the fruit of proud ſelf-conceitedneſs, when men receive not Gods truths as a child his leſſon, in an holy ſubmiſſion to the omniſcience of our Teacher, but as Cenſurers that are too wiſe to learn.

Object. *But we cannot Convert our ſelves till God Convert us: we can do nothing without his grace: It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that ſheweth mercy.*

Anſw. 1. God hath two degrees of mercy to ſhew: the mercy of Converſion firſt, and the mercy of Salvation laſt: the latter he will give to none but thoſe that *will* and *run*, and hath promiſed

promised it to them only. The former is to make them *willing* that were *unwilling*: and though your own *willing* and endeavours deserve not this grace, yet your *wilfull* refusal deserveth that it should be denyed to you. Your *disability* is your very *unwillingness* it self, which excuseth not your sin, but maketh it the greater. You *could* Turn if you were but truly *willing*: and if your *wills* themselves are so corrupted, that nothing but effectuall grace will move them, you have the more cause to seek for that grace, and yield to it, and do what you can in the use of means, and not neglect it, or set against it. Do what you are able first, and then complain of God for denying you grace if you have cause.

Object. *But you seem to intimate all this while that man hath free will.*

Answ.

Answer. The dispute about free-will is beyond your capacitity; I shall therefore now trouble you with no more but this about it. Your will is naturally a *free*, that is, a *self-determining faculty*, but it is *vitiously inclined*, and *backward to good*, and therefore we see by sad experience that it hath not a *vertuous morall freedom*. But that is the *wickedness* of it, which deserveth the punishment. And I pray you let us not befool our selves with opinions. Let the case be your own. If you have an enemy so malicious, that he falls upon you, and beats you every time he meets you, and takes away the lives of your children, will you excuse him, because he saith, [*I have not free-will, it is my nature; I cannot choose unless God give me grace.*] If you have a servant that robbeth you, will you take such an answer from

from him? Might not every Thief and Murderer that is hanged at the Assize give such an answer, [*I have not free-will; I cannot change my own heart: what can I do without Gods grace?*] and shall they therefore be acquit? If not, why then should you think to be acquit for a course of sin against the Lord?

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2. FRom hence also you may observe these three things together. 1. What a subtile tempter Satan is. 2. What a deceitfull thing sin is. 3. What a foolish creature corrupted man is. *A subtile tempter* indeed, that can perswade the greatest part of the world to go wilfully into everlasting fire, when they have so many warnings and dissuasives as they have. *A deceitfull thing is sin* indeed,

indeed, that can bewitch ſo many thouſands to part with everlaſting life, for a thing ſo baſe and utterly unworthy! *A fooliſh creature* is man indeed, that will be ſo cheated of his ſalvation for nothing; yea for a *known nothing*; and that by an enemy, and a known enemy. You would think it impoſſible that any man in his wits ſhould be perſwaded for a trifle to caſt himſelf into the fire, or water, or into a coal-pit, to the deſtruction of his life. And yet men will be enticed to caſt themſelves into Hell. If your naturall lives were in your own hands, that you ſhould not die till you would kill your ſelves, how long would moſt of you live? And yet when your everlaſting life is ſo far in your own hands under God, that you cannot be undone till you undoyour ſelves, how few of you will forbear your own undoing? Ah what a ſilly thing is

man!

man! and what a bewitching and befooling thing is sin?

3. FRom hence also you may learn, that it is no great wonder if wicked men be hinderers of others in the way to heaven, and would have as many Unconverted as they can, and would draw them into sin, and keep them in it! Can you expect that they should have any mercy on others, that have none upon themselves? and that they should much stick at the destruction of others, that stick not to destroy themselves? They do no worse by others then they do by themselves.

4. LAstly, you may hence learn, that the greatest enemy to man is himself; and the greatest judgement in this life that can

can befall him, is to be left to himself; and that the great work that Grace hath to do is to save us from our selves, and the greatest accusations and complaints of men should be against themselves; and that the greatest work that we have to do our selves, is to resist our selves; and the greatest enemy that we should daily pray, and watch, and strive against, is our own carnall hearts and wills; and the greatest part of your work, if you would do good to others, and help them to heaven, is to save them from themselves, even from their own blind understandings, and corrupted wills, and perverse affections, and violent passions, and unruly senses. I only name all these for brevity sake, and leave them to your further consideration.

WELL

WELL Sirs, now we have found out the great Delinquent and Murderer of ſouls, (even mens ſelves, their own wills) what remains but that you judge according to the evidence, and confeſs this great iniquity before the Lord, and be humbled for it, and do ſo no more? To theſe three ends diſtinctly, I ſhall add a few words more. 1. Further to convince you. 2. To humble you. And 3. To reform you, if there be yet any hope.

1. We know ſo much of the exceeding *gracious nature of God*, who is willing to do good, and delighteth to ſhew mercy, that we have no reaſon to ſuſpect *him* of being the culpable cauſe of our death, or to call him cruel: He made all good, and he preſerveth and maintaineth all, the eyes of all

all things do wait upon him; and he giveth them their meat in due season; he openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of all the living, *Psalm* 145. 15, 16. He is not only *righteous in all his wayes*, (and therefore will deal justly) *and holy in all his works*, (and therefore not the author of sin) but [*he is also good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.*] *Psal.* 145. 17, 9.

But as for *man*, we know his mind is dark, his will perverse, his affections carry him so headlong, that he is fitted by his folly and corruption to such a work as the destroying of himself. If you saw a Lamb lie killed in the way, would you sooner suspect the *sheep*, or the *dog*, or *woolf*, to be the author of it, if they both stood by? or if you see an house broken and the people murthered, would you sooner suspect the *Prince* or *Judge*, that

that is wise and just, and had no need; or a *known Thief or Murtherer?* I say therefore as *James* 1. 13, 14, 15. *Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man,* (to draw him to sin) *But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*] You see here, that sin is the brat of your own concupiscence, and not to be fathered on God; and that death is the off-spring of your own sin, and the fruit which it will yield you as soon as it is ripe. You have a treasure of evil in your selves as a spider hath of poyson: from whence you are bringing forth hurt to your selves, and spinning such webs as entangle your own souls. Your

Na-

Nature ſhews, its *you* that are the cauſe.

2. Its evident that you are your own deſtroyers, in that you are ſo *Ready to entertain any Temptation* almoſt that is offered you. Satan is ſcarce readier to move you to any evil, then you are ready to hear, and do as he would have you. 1. he would tempt your underſtanding to error and prejudice, you yield. If he would hinder you from good reſolutions, it is ſoon done. If he would cool any good deſires or affections, it is ſoon done. If he would kindle any luſt or vile affections and deſires in you, it is ſoon done: if he will put you on to evil thoughts, or words, or deeds, you are ſo free that he needs not rod or ſpur: if he would keep you from holy thoughts, and words, and wayes, a little doth it; you need no curb. You examine not his ſuggeſtions,

nor

not resist them with any resolution, nor cast them out as he casts them in, nor quench the sparks which he endeavoureth to kindle; but you set in with him, and meet him half way, and embrace his motions, and tempt him to tempt you. And its easie to catch such greedy fish that are ranging for a bait, and will take the bare hook.

3. Your destruction is evidently long of your selves, in that you Resist all that would help to save you, and would do you good, or hinder you from undoing your selves. God would help and save you by his Word, and you resist it, it is too strict for you. He would sanctifie you by his *Spirit*, and you resist and quench it. If any man reprove you for your sin, you fly in his face with evil words; and if he would draw you to an holy life, and tell you of your present

danger, you give him little thanks, but either bid him look to himself, he shall not answer for you; or else at best, you put him off with an heartless thanks, and will not Turn when you are perswaded. If Ministers would privately instruct and help you, you will not come at them: your unhumbled souls do feel but little need of their help. If they would Catechize you, you are too old to be Catechized, though you are not too old to be ignorant and unholy. Whatever they can say to you for your good, you are so self-conceited and wise in your own eyes, (even in the depth of ignorance) that you will regard nothing that agreeth not with your present conceits: but contradict your Teachers, as if you were wiser then they: you resist all that they can say to you, by your ignorance and wilfulness, and foolish Cavils,

and

and shifting evasions, and unthankfull rejections, so that no good that is offered can find any welcome acceptance and entertainment with you.

4. Moreover its apparent that you are self-destroyers, in that you *draw the matter of your sin and destruction even from the blessed God himself.* You like not the contrivances of his Wisdom: You like not his Justice, but take it for cruelty: You like not his Holiness, but are ready to think he is such a one as your selves, *Psalm* 50. 21. and makes as light of sin as you: You like not his Truth, but would have his Threathings, even his peremptory Threathings prove false. And his goodness which you seem most highly to approve, you partly resist, as it would lead you to Repentance, and partly abuse, to the strengthening of your sin, as if you might the freelyer sin, because

God is Mercifull, and becauſe his Grace doth ſo much abound.

5. Yea you *fetch deſtruction from the bleſſed Redeemer, and Death from the Lord of life* himſelf. And nothing more emboldneth you in ſin, then that Chriſt hath died for you; as if now the danger of death were over, and you might boldly venture: As if Chriſt were become a ſervant to Satan and your ſins, and muſt wait upon you while you are abuſing him: and becauſe he is become the Phyſitian of ſouls, and is able to ſave to the utmoſt all that come to God by him; you think he muſt ſuffer you to refuſe his help, and throw away his Medicines, and muſt ſave you whether you will come to God by him or no: ſo that a great part of your ſins are occaſioned by your bold preſumption, upon the death of Chriſt.

Not conſidering that he came

to

to Redeem his people from their ſins, and to ſanctifie them a peculiar people to himſelf, and to conform them in Holineſs to the image of their heavenly Father, and to their head, *Mat.*1.21. *Tit.* 2.14. 1 *Pet.*1.15,16. *Col.*3.10,11. *Phil.* 3. 9, 10.

6. You alſo *fetch your own deſtruction from all the Providences and works of God.* When you think of his Eternal fore-knowledge and Decrees, it is to harden you in your ſin, or poſſeſs your minds with quarrelling thoughts, as if his Decrees might ſpare you the labour of Repentance and an holy life, or elſe were the cauſe of your ſin and death. If he afflict you, you repine: if he proſper you, you the more forget him, and are the backwarder to the thoughts of the life to come. If the wicked proſper, you forget the end that will ſet all reckonings ſtrait, and

are ready to think, its as good be wicked as godly. And thus you draw your death from all.

7. And the like you do *from all the Creatures and mercies of God* to you. He giveth them to you as the Tokens of his Love, and furniture for his ſervice, and you turn them againſt him, to the pleaſing of your fleſh. You eat and drink to pleaſe your appetite, and not for the Glory of God, and to enable you for his Work. Your cloathes you abuſe to pride. Your Riches draw your hearts from Heaven, *Phil.* 3. 18. Your Honours and Applauſe do puff you up: If you have health and ſtrength, it makes you more ſecure and forget your end. Yea other mens mercies are abuſed by you to your hurt. If you ſee their Honours and Dignity, you are provoked to envy them. If you ſee their Riches, you are ready to

covet

covet them. If you look upon beauty, you are ſtirred up to luſt. And its well if godlineſs be not an eye-ſore to you.

8. The *very gifts that God beſtoweth* on you, and the *Ordinances* of Grace which he hath inſtituted for his Church, you turn to ſin. If you have better parts then others, you grow proud and ſelf-conceited: If you have but common gifts, you take them for ſpeciall Grace. You take the bare hearing of your Duty for ſo good a work, as if it would excuſe you for not obeying it. Your Prayers are turned into ſin, becauſe you *regard iniquity in your hearts*, Pſalm 66. 18. *and depart not from iniquity when you call on the name of the Lord*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Your *prayers are abominable, becauſe you turn away your ear from hearing the Law*, Prov. 28. 9. And are more ready to offer the ſacrifice of

fools, (thinking you do God some special service) then to hear his Word and obey it, *Eccles.* 5. 1. You examine not your selves before you receive the Supper of the Lord, but not discerning the Lords Body, do eat and drink judgement to your selves, 1 *Cor.* 11. 28, 29.

9. Yea the *persons that you converse with, and all their actions*, you make the occasions of your sin and destruction. If they live in the fear of God, you hate them. If they live ungodlily, you imitate them: If the wicked are many, you think you may the more boldly follow them; If the godly be few, you are the more emboldened to despise them. If they walk exactly, you think they are too precise; If one of them fall in a particular temptation, you stumble upon them, and turn away from holiness, because that,

others

others are imperfectly holy: as if you were warranted to break your necks, because some others have by their heedlesness sprained a sinew, or put out a bone. If an hypocrite discover himself, you say, *They are all alike*, and think your selves as honest as the best. A Professor can scarce slip into any miscarriage, but because he cuts his finger, you think you may boldly cut your throats. If Ministers deal plainly with you, you say they rail. If they speak gently or coldly, you either sleep under them, or are little more affected then the seats you sit upon. If any errors creep into the Church, some greedily entertain them, and others reproach the Christian Doctrine for them, which is most against them. And if we would draw you from any ancient rooted error, which can but plead two, or three, or six, or seven

hundred years cuſtom, you are as much offended with a motion for Reformation, as if you were to loſe your lives by it, and hold faſt *old* errours, while you cry out againſt *new* ones. Scarce a difference can ariſe among the Miniſters of the Goſpel, but you will fetch your own death from it. And you will not hear, or at leaſt not obey the unqueſtionable Doctrine of any of thoſe that jump not with your conceits: *One* will not hear a Miniſter, becauſe he readeth his Sermon, and another will not hear him, becauſe he doth not read them. *One* will not hear him, becauſe he ſaith the Lords Prayer, and another will not hear him, becauſe he doth not uſe it. *One* will not hear them that are *for* Epiſcopacy, and another will not hear them that are *againſt it*. And thus I might ſhew it you in many other caſes, how you turn all that comes

comes neer you to your own deſtruction, ſo clear is it that the ungodly are ſelf-deſtroyers, and that their perdition is of themſelves.

METhinks now upon the conſideration of what is ſaid, and the review of your own waies, you ſhould bethink you what you have done, and be aſhamed and deeply humbled to remember it. If you be not, I pray you conſider theſe following Truths.

1. To be your own deſtroyers, is to ſin againſt the deepeſt principle in your Natures, even the Principle of ſelf-preſervation. Every thing naturally deſireth or endineth to its own felicity, welfare or perfection. And will you ſet your ſelves to your own deſtruction? when you are commanded to love your Neighbours

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as your ſelves, it is ſuppoſed that you naturally love your ſelves. But if you love your Neighbours no better then your ſelves, it ſeems you would have all the world be damned.

2. How extreamly do you croſs your own intentions! I know you intend not your own damnation, even when you are procuring it; you think you are but doing good to your ſelves, by gratifying the deſires of your fleſh. But alas, it is but as a draught of cold water in a burning Feaver, or as the ſcratching of an itching wild-fire, which increaſeth the Diſeaſe and pain. If indeed you would have pleaſure, or profit, or honour, ſeek them where they are to be found, and do not hunt after them in the way to hell.

3. What pitty is it, that you ſhould do that againſt your ſelves, which none elſe in earth or Hell can

can do! If all the world were combined againſt you, or all the Devils in Hell were combined againſt you, they could not deſtroy you without your ſelves, nor make you ſin but by your own conſent. And will you do that againſt your ſelves which no one elſe can do? You have hateſull thoughts of the Devil, becauſe he is your enemy, and endeavoureth your deſtruction. And will you be worſe then Devils to your ſelves? Why thus it is with you, if you had hearts to underſtand it: When you run into ſin, and run from godlineſs, and refuſe to turn at the Call of God, you do more againſt your own ſouls, then men or devils could do beſides. And if you ſhould ſet your ſelves, and bend your wits to do your ſelves the greateſt miſchief, you could not deviſe to do a greater.

4. You are falſe to the truſt that

that God hath repoſed in you. He hath much entruſted you with your own ſalvation: and will you betray your truſt? He hath ſet you with all diligence to keep your hearts: and is this the keeping of them? *Prov.* 4. 23.

5. You do even forbid all others to pitty you, when you will have no pitty on your ſelves: If you cry to God in the day of your calamity, for Mercy, Mercy; What can you expect, but that he ſhould thruſt you away, and ſay, [*Nay, thou wouldſt not have mercy on thy ſelf. Who brought this upon thee but thy own wilfulneſs?*] And if your Brethren ſee you everlaſtingly in miſery, how ſhall they pitty you that were your own deſtroyers, and would not be diſſwaded?

6. It will everlaſtingly make you your own Tormentors in Hell to think on it, that you brought your ſelves wilfully to that miſery.

O what a griping thought it will be for ever to think with your selves, [That this was your own doing! That you were warned of this Day, and warned again, but it would not do. That you wilfully sinned, and wilfully turned away from God: That you had time as well as others, but you abused it: You had Teachers as well as others, but you refused their instructions: You had holy Examples, but you did not imitate them: You were offered Christ, and Grace, and Glory, as well as others, but you had more mind of your fleshly pleasures: You had a prize in your hands, but you had not an heart to lay it out, *Proverbs.* 17. 16. Can it choose but torment you to think of this your present folly? O that your eyes were opened to see what you have done in the wilfull wronging of your own souls!

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and that you better understood those words of God, *Prov.* 8. 33, 34, 35, 36. *Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not; Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors: For who so findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain the favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: All they that hate me, love death.*]

AND now I am come to the Conclusion of this work, my heart is troubled to think how I shall leave you; lest after this the flesh should still deceive you, and the world, and the Devil should keep you asleep, and I should leave you as I find you, till you awake in Hell. Though in care of your poor souls, I am afraid of this, as knowing the obstinacy

ſtinacy of a carnal heart, yet I can ſay with the Prophet *Jeremy*, 17. 16. [*I have not deſired the wofull day the Lord knoweth.*] I have not with *James* and *John* deſired that *fire might come from heaven* to conſume them that refuſed Jeſus Chriſt, *Luke* 9. 54. But it is the preventing of the Eternal fire that I have been all this while endeavouring: And O that it had been a needleſs work! That God and conſcience might have been as willing to ſpare me this labour, as ſome of you could have been. Dear friends! I am ſo loth you ſhould lie in everlaſting fire, and be ſhut out of Heaven, if it be poſſible to prevent it, that I ſhall once more ask you, What do you now reſolve? Will you Turn or Die? I look upon you as a Phyſitian on his Patient in a dangerous diſeaſe: that ſaith to him, [*Though you are far gone, take but this Medicine*

dicine, and forbear but these few things that are hurtfull to you, and I dare warrant your life, but if you will not do this, you are but a dead man.] What would you think of such a man, if the Physitian and all the friends he hath cannot perswade him to take *one* Medicine to save his Life, or to forbear one or two poysonous things that would kill him? This is your case. As far as you are gone in sin, do but now Turn and Come to Christ, and take his Remedies, and your souls shall live. Cast up your deadly sins by Repentance, and return not to the poysonous vomit any more, and you shall do well. But yet if it were your bodies that we had to deal with, we might partly know what to do for you, though you would not consent. You might be held or bound, while the Medicine were poured down your throats, and hurtfull

things

things might be kept from you. But about your ſouls it cannot be ſo, we cannot convert you againſt your wills. There is no carrying mad men to Heaven in Fetters. You may be *Condemned againſt your wills*, becauſe you *ſinned with your wills*; but you cannot be *ſaved againſt your wills*. The Wiſdom of God hath thought meet to lay mens Salvation or deſtruction exceeding much upon the choice of their own wills, that no man ſhall come to Heaven, that choſe not the way to Heaven; and no man ſhall come to Hell, but ſhall be forced to ſay, *I have the thing I choſe, my own will did bring me hither*. Now if I could but get you to be *willing*, to be *throughly*, and *reſolvedly*, and *Habitually willing*, the work were more then half done. And alas, muſt we loſe our *friends*, and muſt they loſe their *God*, their *happineſs*, their

their *ſouls* for want of this? O God forbid! It is a ſtrange thing to me, that men are ſo inhumane and ſtupid in the greateſt matters, that in leſſer things are very civil, and courteous, and good Neighbours. For ought I know, I have the Love of all, or almoſt all my Neighbours, ſo far, that if I ſhould ſend to every man in the Town, or Pariſh, or Country, and requeſt a reaſonable courteſie of them, they would grant it me: And yet when I come to requeſt of them the greateſt matter in the world for themſelves, and not for me, I can have nothing of many of them but a patient hearing. I know not whether people think a man in the Pulpit is in good ſadneſs or not, and means as he ſpeaks: For I think I have few Neighbours, but if I were ſitting familiarly with them, and telling them of what I have ſeen, or done, or known in

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the world, they would believe me, and regard what I say: But when I tell them from the infallible Word of God, what they themselves shall see and know in the world to come, they shew by their lives that they do either not believe it, or not much regard it. If I met ever an one of them on the way, and told them, Yonder is a Cole-pit, or there's a quicksand, or there are thieves lie in wait for you; I could perswade them to turn by: But when I tell them that Satan lyeth in wait for them, and that sin is poyson to them, and that Hell is not a matter to be jested with: they go on as if they did not hear me. Truly neighbours, I am in as good earnest with you in the Pulpit, as I am in any familiar discourse; and if ever you will regard me, I beseech you let it be here. I think there is never a man of you all, but if my *own*

soul

ſoul lay at your wills, you would be willing to ſave it (though I cannot promiſe that you would leave your ſins for it.) Tell me, thou Drunkard, that art ſo cruel to me that ſpeaks to thee, that thou wouldſt not forbear a few Cups of drink, if thou kneweſt it would ſave my ſoul from Hell? Hadſt thou rather I did burn there for ever, then thou ſhouldſt live ſoberly as other men do? If ſo, may I not ſay, thou art an unmercifull monſter, and not a man? If I came hungry or naked to one of your doors, would you not part with more then a cup of drink to relieve me? I am confident you would: if it were to ſave my life, I know you would (ſome of you) hazzard your own. And yet will you not be entreated to part with your ſenſuall pleaſures for your own Salvation? Wouldſt thou forbear an hundred cups of drink

man,

man, to save my life if it were in thy power, and will thou not do it to save thy *own soul*? I profess to you Sirs, I am as hearty a beggar with you this day for the saving of your own souls, as I would be for my own supply if I were forced to come a begging to your doors. And therefore if you would hear me then, hear me now. If you would pitty me then, be intreated now to pitty your selves. I do again beseech you, as if it were on my bended knees, that you would hearken to your Redeemer, and *turn that you may live.* All you that have lived in ignorance, and carelesnes, and presumption to this day? All you that have been drowned in the cares of the world, and have no mind of God and Eternal Glory: all you that are enslaved to your fleshly desires of meats, and drinks, and sports, and lusts, and all you that know not

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the neceſſity of holineſs, and never were acquainted with the ſanctifying work of the Holy Ghoſt upon your ſouls; that never embraced your bleſſed Redeemer by a lively faith, and admiring and thankful apprehenſions of his love, and that never felt an higher eſtimation of God and Heaven, and an heartier Love to them, then to your fleſhly proſperity and the things below. I earneſtly beſeech you, not only for my ſake, but for the Lords ſake, and for your ſouls ſakes, that you go not on one day longer in your former condition, but look about you, and cry to God for converting Grace, that you may be made new creatures, and may eſcape the plagues that are a little before you. And if ever you will do any thing for me, grant me this requeſt, to Turn from your evill wayes and live. Deny me any thing that ever I

ſhall

shall ask you for my self, if you will but grant me this. And if you deny me this, I care not for any thing else that you would grant me. Nay, as ever you will do any thing at the request of the Lord that made you and redeemed you, deny him not this: For if you deny him this, he cares for nothing that you shall grant him. As ever you would have him hear your prayers, and grant your requests, and do for you at the hour of death and day of judgment, or in any of your extremities, deny not his request now in the day of your prosperity. Oh Sirs, believe it, Death, and Judgement, and Heaven, and Hell are other matters when you come near them, then they seem to carnal eyes afar off. Then you would hear such a message as I bring you with more awakened regardfull hearts.

WELL, though I cannot hope so well of all, I will hope that some of you are by this time purposing to Turn and Live, and that you are ready to ask me, as the Jews did *Peter*, *Acts* 2.37. when they were pricked in their hearts, and said, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do? How might we come to be truly converted? We are willing, if we did but know our duty. God forbid that we should choose destruction, by refusing conversion, as hitherto we have done.*]

If these be the thoughts and purposes of your hearts, I say of you as God did of a promising people, *Deut.* 5. 28, 29. [*They have well said, all that they have spoken; O that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always!*] Your purposes are good: O that there be but an heart in you to perform

these

these purposes! And in hope hereof I shall gladly give you direction what to do, and that but briefly, that you may the easier Remember it for your practice.

DIRECTION I.

IF you would be converted and saved, *labour to understand the necessity and true Nature of Conversion: For* what, and *from* what, and *to* what, and *by* what it is that you must Turn.

Consider in what a lamentable condition you are till the hour of your Conversion, that you may see it is not a state to be rested in. You are under the guilt of all the sins that ever you committed, and under the wrath of God, and the curse of his Law; you are bond-slaves to the Devil, and daily imployed in his work, against the

Lord, your ſelves, and others: you are ſpiritually dead and deformed, as being void of the holy life, and nature, and image of the Lord. You are unfit for any holy work, and do nothing that is truly pleaſing unto God. You are without any promiſe or aſſurance of his protection; and live in continual danger of his Juſtice, not knowing what hour you may be ſnatcht away to Hell, and moſt certain to be damned if you die in that condition. And nothing ſhort of Converſion can prevent it. What ever civilities, or amendments, or vertues are ſhort of true converſion, will never procure the ſaving of your ſouls. Keep the true ſenſe of this natural miſery, and ſo of the neceſſity of Converſion on your hearts.

And then you muſt underſtand what it is to be Converted: It is to have a New heart or Diſpoſition,

position, and a New Converſation.

Queſt. 1. *For what muſt you Turn?*

Anſw. For theſe ends following, which you may attain: 1. You ſhall immediately be made living Members of Chriſt, and have intereſt in him, & be renewed after the Image of God, and be adorned with all his graces, and quickned with a new and heavenly life, and ſaved from the tyranny of Satan, and the dominion of ſin, and be juſtified from the curſe of the Law, and have the pardon of all the ſins of your whole lives, and be accepted of God, and made his Sons, and have liberty with boldneſs to call him Father, and go to him by prayer in all your needs, with a promiſe of acceptance, you ſhall have the Holy Ghoſt to dwell in you, to ſanctifie and guide you; you ſhall have part in the bro-

ther-hood, communion and prayers of the Saints: You shall be fitted for Gods service, and be freed from the Dominion of sin, and be usefull and a blessing to the place where you live: and shall have the promise of this life, and that which is to come. You shall want nothing that is truly good for you, and your necessary afflictions you shall be enabled to bear; you may have some taste of communion with God in the Spirit, especially in all holy Ordinances, where God prepareth a feast for your souls; shall be heirs of heaven while you live on earth, and may foresee by faith the everlasting glory, and so may live and die in peace; and you will never be so low, but your happiness will be incomparably greater then your misery.

How precious is every one of these blessings, which I do but briefly

briefly name, and which in this life you may receive!

And then 2. at death your souls shall go to Christ, and at the day of Judgement both soul and body shall be Justified and Glorified, and enter into your Masters Joy: where your happiness will consist in these particulars.

1. You shall be perfected your selves: your mortal bodies shall be made immortal, and the corruptible shall put on incorruption; you shall no more be hungry, or thirsty, or weary, or sick: nor shall you need to fear either shame or sorrow, or death, or hell. Your souls shall be perfectly freed from sin, and perfectly fitted for the knowledge, and love, and praises of the Lord.

2. Your employment shall be to behold your glorified Redeemer, with all your holy fellow-Citizens of Heaven: and to see the Glory

of the most blessed God, and to love him perfectly, and be beloved by him, and to praise him everlastingly.

3. Your glory will contribute to the glory of the new *Jerusalem*, the City of the Living God, which is more then to have a private felicity to your selves.

3. Your Glory will contribute to the glorifying of your Redeemer, who will everlastingly be magnified and pleased in you that are the travail of his soul: and this is more then the glorifying of your selves.

5. And the eternal Majesty, the living God, will be glorified in your Glory, both as he is magnified by your praises, and as he communicateth of his glory and goodness to you, and as he is pleased in you, and in the accomplishment of his glorious works, in the glory of the new *Jerusalem*, and of his Son.

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All this the pooreſt beggar of you that is Converted, ſhall Certainly and Endleſly enjoy.

2. You ſee *For* what you muſt Turn: Next you muſt underſtand *From* what you muſt Turn: And that is, (in a word) From your *Carnal Self*, which is the End of all the Unconverted. From the fleſh that would be pleaſed before God, and would ſtill be enticing you thereto. From the world, that is the bait; and from the Devil, that is the Angler for ſouls, and the deceiver. And ſo from all known and wilfull ſin.

3. Next you muſt know *To what* you muſt Turn: And that is, To God as your End; to Chriſt as the way to the Father; to Holineſs as the way appointed you by Chriſt; and ſo to the uſe of all the helps and means of grace afforded you by the Lord.

4. Lastly, you must know *By what* you must Turn. And that is by Christ as the only Redeemer, and Intercessor: and by the Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier: And by the Word as his Instrument or Means: And by Faith and Repentance as the means and duties on your part to be performed. All this is of necessity.

DIRECTION II.

IF you will be Converted and Saved, *be much in secret serious Consideration.* Inconsiderateness undoes the world. Withdraw your selves oft into retired secrecy, and there bethink you of the end why you were made, of the life you have lived, the time you have lost, the sin you have committed: of the love, and sufferings, and fulness of Christ: of the danger you

you are in, of the nearneſs of death and judgement, and of the certainty and excellency of the Joyes of Heaven; and of the certainty and terror of the torments of Hell; and the Eternity of both: and of the neceſſity of Converſion and an holy life. Steep your hearts in ſuch Conſiderations as theſe.

DIRECTION III.

IF you will be Converted and Saved, *attend upon the word of God; which is the ordinary means.* Read the Scripture, or hear it read, and other holy writings that do apply it, conſtantly: attend on the publike preaching of the Word. As God will lighten the world by the Sun, and not by himſelf alone without it: So will he Convert and ſave men by his Miniſters, who are the Lights of the world,

Acts

Acts 26.17,18. *Mat.*5.14. When he hath miraculously humbled *Paul*, he sendeth him to *Ananias*, *Acts* 9.10. and when he hath sent an Angel to *Cornelius*, it is but to bid him send for *Peter*, who must tell him what he is to believe and do.

DIRECTION IV.

BEtake your self to God in a course of earnest constant Prayer: Confess and lament your former lives, and beg his grace to illuminate and convert you. Beseech him to pardon what is past, and to give you his Spirit, and change your hearts and lives, and lead you in his wayes, and save you from temptations. And ply this work daily, and be not weary of it.

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DIRECTION V.

PResently give over your known and wilfull sins. Make a stand, and go that way no further. Be drunk no more: but avoid the place and occasion of it. Cast away your lusts and sinful pleasures with detestation. Curse, and swear, and rail no more: and if you have wronged any; restore as *Zacheus* did. If you will commit again your old sins, what blessing can you expect on the means for your Conversion?

DIRECTION VI.

PResently, if possible, change your Company, if it have hitherto been bad. Not by forsaking your necessary Relations, but your

your unneceſſary ſinfull companions; and *joyn your ſelves with thoſe that fear the Lord*, and enquire of them the way to heaven, *Acts* 9. 19, 26. *Pſal.* 15. 4.

DIRECTION VII.

Deliver up your ſelves to the Lord Jeſus as the Phyſitian of your ſouls, that he may pardon you by his blood, and ſanctifie you by his Spirit, by his word and Miniſters, the inſtruments of the Spirit. He is the way, the truth and the Life; there is no coming to the Father but by him, *John* 14. 6. Nor is there any other name under heaven, by which you can be ſaved, *Acts* 4. 12. Study therefore his perſon and Natures, and what he hath done and ſuffered for you: and what he is to you: and what he will be, and how

how he is fitted to the full supply of all your neceſſities.

DIRECTION VIII.

IF you mean indeed to Turn and Live, *Do it ſpeedily, without delay.* If you be not willing to Turn to day, you be not willing to do it at all. Remember, you are all this while in your blood, under the guilt of many thouſand ſins, and under Gods wrath, and you ſtand at the very brink of hell; there is but a ſtep between you and death. And this is not a caſe for a man that is well in his wits to be quiet in. Up therefore preſently and fly as for your lives, as you would be gone out of your houſe if it were all on fire over your head. O if you did but know what continual danger you live in, and what daily unſpeakable loſs you do ſuſtain,

ſuſtain, and what a ſafer and ſweeter life you might live, you would not ſtand trifling, but preſently turn. Multitudes miſcarry that wilfully delay when they are convinced that it muſt be done. Your lives are ſhort and uncertain; and what a caſe are you in if you die before you throughly turn! You have ſtaid too long already; and wronged God too long, ſin getteth ſtrength and rooting while you delay. Your Converſion will grow more hard and doubtfull. You have much to do; and therefore put not all off to the laſt, leſt God forſake you, and give you up to your ſelves, and then you are undone for ever.

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DIRECTION IX.

IF you will Turn and Live, do it *unreservedly*, *absolutely* and *universally*. Think not to capitulate with Christ, and divide your heart betwixt him and the world; and to part with some sins, and keep the rest: and to let go that which your flesh can spare. This is but self-deluding: you must in heart and resolution forsake all that you have, or else you cannot be his Disciples, *Luke* 14. 26, 33. If you will not take God and Heaven for your portion, and lay all below at the feet of Christ, but you must needs also have your good things here, and have an earthly portion, and God and Glory is not enough for you; it is in vain to dream of salvation on these terms: For it *will not be*. If you seem never so

ſo Religious, if yet it be but a *Carnal* Religiouſneſs, and the fleſhes proſperity, or pleaſure, or ſafety be ſtill *excepted* in your devotedneſs to God; this is as certain a way to death as open prophaneſs, though it be more plauſible.

DIRECTION X.

IF you will Turn and Live, do it *Reſolvedly*, and ſtand not ſtill deliberating, as if it were a doubtfull caſe. Stand not wavering as if you were yet uncertain, whether God or the fleſh be the better Maſter; or whether Heaven or Hell be the better End; or whether ſin or holineſs be the better way. But away with your former luſts, and preſently, habitually, fixedly Reſolve: Be not one day of one mind, and

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the next of another; but be at a point with all the world; and Resolvedly give up your selves and all you have to God. Now while you are reading or hearing this, Resolve. Before you sleep another night, Resolve. Before you stir from the place, Resolve. Before Satan have time to take you off, Resolve. You never Turn indeed till you do Resolve; and that with a firm unchangeable Resolution.

So much for the Directions.

AND now I have done my part in this work, that you may Turn at the Call of God and Live. What will become of it, I cannot tell. I have cast the seed at Gods command; but it is not in my power to give the increase. I can go no further with my

my message: I cannot bring it to your hearts, nor make it work. I cannot do *your* parts for *you*, to entertain it and consider of it: Nor I cannot do *Gods* part, by opening your hearts to cause you to entertain it: Nor can I shew you Heaven or Hell to your eye-sight, nor give you new and tender hearts. If I knew what more to do for your Conversion, I hope I should do it.

But O thou that art the gracious Father of Spirits, that hast sworn thou delightest not in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn and Live, deny not thy blessing to these Perswasions and Directions; and suffer not thine enemies to triumph in thy sight, and the great deceiver of souls to prevail against thy Son, thy Spirit, and thy Word. O pitty poor Unconvereed sinners, that have not hearts to pitty or help themselves. Command the blind

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to see, and the deaf to hear, and the dead to live: and let not sin and death be able to resist thee. Awaken the secure; Resolve the unresolved; Confirm the wavering: and let the eyes of sinners that read these lines, be next employed in weeping over their sins; and bring them to themselves and to thy Son, before their sin have brought them to perdition. If thou say but the word, these poor endeavours shall prosper to the winning of many a soul, to their everlasting joy, and thine everlasting glory, Amen.

Finitur, 1656. *Decemb.* 31.

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Bax's Call to the Unconverted.